The Lutheran Outlook

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Rock Island, Illinois

The Case of Niemoeller
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These Three
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By G. Elson Ruff

Vol. XI DECEMBER, 1946 No. 12

Pointed Paragraphs

TAKE THY GREAT POWER AND REIGN

TO LOVE GOD is to have no will but His; it is to have His holy law in faithful observance, and to hate all iniquity. To love God, is to love that which Jesus Christ loved, poverty, humiliation, suffering:—it is to hate that which was hateful to Christ Jesus, the world, vanity, our passions. Can we claim affection for that from which we turn away? To love God is to delight in communion with Him; to desire His presence:—the love that rejoices not in the presence of the object beloved is false and feigned.

The Saviour came to kindle upon earth a heavenly flame, pervading, enlightening, consuming. Yet men's hearts are cold as death. They love money, houses, rank, reputation. They take pleasure in conversation, in amusement, in light business of an hour. In God alone they have not delight:—all their interest and attachment is lavished on the creature. Shall we still refuse to taste the sweetness of a higher love? Until when shall we go on to cherish poison and destruction?

Merciful God, take to Thyself Thy great power and reign—reign over us; subdue our rebellion; bring back our alienation. Let the hallowed flame of Thy love put out all meaner fires. What is there on earth of loveliest, that is not to be found in Thee, as its infinite source, higher, and holier, and more attractive still. Grant us Thy grace that we may love Thee, Thee only, Thee wholly, Thee eternally.

—*Fenelon.*

Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself.—Emerson.

A DISTURBING FACT

It is a deeply disturbing fact that no fewer than seventeen million children in our country receive no religious instruction whatever. For the future of the nation it is desirable that we leave no measures untried to enroll all our future citizens in the Sunday schools of America. No civilization can endure without religion. Without religion there can be no vision, and where there is no vision the people perish. * * * No person can call himself educated who does not maintain familiarity with the Bible, the greatest of all books.

—*Governor Thos. Dewey.*

I know the Lord is always on the side of right, but it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and the nation be on the Lord's side.—Lincoln.

HOLY COMMUNION

I have a rendezvous with Life
Within the Blessed Sacrament,
When over me the pastor bends,
And Jesus comes, exceeding fair;
I have a rendezvous with Life
For He has promised to be there.
I know I am not worthy thus
To take His life mysterious,
My sins are higher than a hill,
His love is deeper than the sea;
And yet in my communion still
I find His mercy healeth me;
And I to my pledged word am true;
I shall not fail that rendezvous!

—*Bishop Stewart.*

Every time you plant a doubt in my heart you add a pain.—The Watchword.

REGULATION

Regulation—of prices or any other social or economic activity—is always difficult. Havelock Ellis illustrates its complexity aptly in "The Task of Social Hygiene." He relates in that book how Charles V, the powerful Hapsburg monarch who ruled half of Europe in the Sixteenth Century, occupied himself, after retirement to the secluded monastery at Yuste, by trying to synchronize two clocks. He found it virtually impossible to regulate them exactly. One day, it is reported, he turned to his assistant and exclaimed, "To think that I attempted to force the reason and conscience of thousands of men into one mould—and I cannot make two clocks agree!"—*Property.*

Moliere was asked why in some countries the king may assume the crown when 14 years of age but cannot marry until he is 18. "Because," he replied, "it is more difficult to rule a wife than a kingdom."—Journeyman Barber.

ALCOHOL'S GROWTH

There are many church people who are not fully awakened to the tremendous growth of the alcohol business in America. Shortly after we had the privilege of writing the Crusade Manual for the year of evangelism in the Crusade for Christ we had an interesting letter from a layman in Ohio. His pastor, from the pulpit, had referred to the $7,000,000,000 figure mentioned above which we had written into the Manual. After the service he questioned the accuracy of the statement and his minister referred him to us. We in turn quoted the authority for the figure which is the Department of Commerce at Washington and heard nothing more from him. The sad part of it is, that Methodist is typical o thousands who can't believe that th inroads of the liquor traffic have gon so far and are so well entrenched.

But the real story is not to be foun in figures as astounding as they ar That is to be found in the tragedie behind the figures, which are bein enacted in life situations. Note ho frequently crimes are associated wit drink and drinking places. A pasto friend of ours said that almost invari ably when he is called to help mend broken home, he discovers that drin has played a vicious part.—*Michiga Advocate.*

We make a living by what we ge but we make a life by what we giv —Construction Digest.

IT JUST COULDN'T BE

The elderly, extremely garrulous lad was a frequent visitor at the doctor office. On one occasion the doctor ha patiently endured a lengthy recital o her troubles and had written out a ne prescription. She got up to leave an was about to pass the threshold whe suddenly she turned and said: "B doctor, you haven't looked to see if m tongue is coated." "My dear lady wearily replied the physician, "or doesn't look for grass on a race-track —*Franklin Field.*

You can't keep trouble from comin but you needn't give it a chair to s in.—Henry Martin, This Week.

The Lutheran Outlook

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Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill.

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The
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EDITORIAL

One World--God's World

American Lutheran Conference Ponders Problems of Church and World at 8th Biennial Convention

IT WAS A soul-satisfying meeting—the 8th biennial convention of the American Lutheran Conference, held in Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Rockford, Ill., November 13-15. In the first place, it afforded an opportunity to worship in one of America's most beautiful Lutheran sanctuaries and to be edified by some splendid spiritual messages. In the second place, it was a demonstration of a growing spirit of Christian understanding between the five constituent synods composing the Conference, and undoubtedly served to knit more closely the bonds of fellowship that unite them. In the third place, there was evidenced an almost humble spirit of renunciation on the part of the Conference which repeatedly made it clear that the Conference is not seeking any "place in the sun" for itself but is solely concerned in the glory of the Kingdom of God and in furthering the cause of unity among fellow Lutherans.

"One World—God's World" was the theme that ran through all the sermons and addresses. Retiring President Harold L. Yochum struck the keynote of the convention in his opening sermon when he declared that theology is as pertinent to the understanding of the concept of one world as geography, geology, botany, zoology, anthropology, sociology, or political science.

"And I submit," added the Conference executive, "that there is nothing man needs more urgently to know about this one world today than God's relationship to the world. It is because man has tried to crowd God out of the world to all intents and purposes that he has made so many unnecessary mistakes with such tragic consequences."

Genuine acceptance of the concept of one world, Dr. Yochum continued, will cause men to hesitate before they charge an entire nation with war guilt or leave a stricken people to suffer starvation.

"We can no more insist that we have no responsibility for the welfare of other nations," he asserted, "than we can attribute their fate to an arbitrary will of God. What frightful injustices and sufferings result when victorious nations enslave or evict whole populations, as Germany did during the war, and as Russia is doing now. Ruthless oppressors presume to play God and to order the course of history and the destiny of nations. Our own ineffectual policy of dealing with the problems of the reconstruction of Germany gives us little cause for self-satisfaction."

BUT THE CONFERENCE was not satisfied with merely discussing the convention theme; it also took some steps to bring about the realization of the Christian ideal of "One World—God's World." This was particularly evidenced in its action on the problem of Negro-White relations. One of the proposals of the Commission

on Social Relations suggested that Negroes should be received into white churches in localities where they are too few in number to have churches of their own. It is rather unfortunate that this proposal should have precipitated a debate between northern and southern delegates, since the clash of opinion tended to obscure some really fine statements in the Commission's report which was adopted by the convention.

One resolution called on the Church and its members to "make protests against injustice done the Negro, directing such protests to public officials, business people, educators, and all others who have a share in determining policies affecting Negroes."

Another placed the Conference on record in favor of receiving Negroes into "church-supported schools and seminaries, hospitals, and welfare institutions." Members were urged to "show unassuming, unpatronizing, and genuine politeness and friendliness in all contacts with Negroes," and to "take keen interest in available and effective means of creating inter-racial understanding and co-operation, such as conferences and forums and inter-racial committees and local branches of inter-racial organizations."

The Conference also voted in favor of "a far-sighted and well-directed program of Negro missions with a view of establishing all-Negro churches where circumstances warrant them." It likewise went on record in favor of "co-operating with the National Lutheran Council in its effort to provide Negroes with a church program where they are too few to have churches of their own."

Finally, the convention adopted a resolution offered by Dr. Bernhard Christensen, president of Augsburg College, requesting its Commission on Social Relations "to give further study to the problem of integrating the life of Negro and White Christians at the congregational level, to the end that in our Lutheran Church in America we may achieve completely Scriptural and practicable expression of our brotherhood in Christ with Negro Christians."

WHILE THE CONFERENCE was thinking of the central theme of "One World", it was only natural that it should also think of "One Church." It has always been deeply concerned about the unity of the Lutheran Church in particular, and the Rockford convention this year went so far as to make it evident that the Conference itself is willing to "decrease" if by such renunciation it can bring about the "increase" of a more representative organization of Lutherans in America.

All this was made evident when the convention, in response to the report of the Commission on Lutheran Church Unity, adopted the following significant resolutions:

"1. The Conference reaffirms its attitude expressed in the resolution of the Rock Island convention, namely, that it is "looking toward a more inclusive organization whose constituency shall be truly representative of the Lutheran Church of America.'

"2. The Conference declares to the National Lutheran Council its undeviating purpose to find through this agency the door to effective unities in faith and in labor for all Lutheran Churches in America."

The significance of these resolutions will be appreciated when it is remembered that in 1942, when the Conference at Rock Island declared itself in favor of "a more inclusive organization" of Lutherans, it also took the position that "the American Lutheran Conference must leave the door open, as far as it is concerned, for all Lutheran bodies." It is evident, therefore, that at that time there were many Conference leaders who cherished the hope that the Conference itself would eventually become the means through which the larger federation of Lutherans might be realized.

That ambition has now been definitely renounced. By its Rockford decision, the Conference points to the National Lutheran Council as the logical agency through which greater unity in faith and work shall be accomplished. This was not prompted by any spirit of defeatism within the Conference. On the contrary, we have not attended any of its conventions in which greater unanimity of opinion or a more cordial spirit of Christian fellowship manifested themselves. The delegates seemed to be of one heart and one mind on practically every issue that came before the Conference.

However, the fact that the Council represents two-thirds of American Lutheranism whereas the Conference includes only one-half as many, seems to be the decisive factor that has led the Conference to yield again and again in favor of strengthening the Council. This was the motivating influence that led the Conference two years ago to surrender its Student Service work to the Council, and this also led the Conference this year to offer its official organ, the LUTHERAN OUTLOOK, to the Council.

Does this mean that the Conference, as some one suggested at Rockford, is now "ready to bow itself out of the picture" of the contemporary Lutheran scene? Hardly. It was quite evident from the expressions heard at the convention that the Conference still has an important mission to fulfil, and that there is no disposition on the part of its five constituent bodies to dissolve the ties of spiritual fellowship which they have found in the Conference until a more comprehensive organization of Lutherans is achieved embracing a larger fellowship. But the Rockford resolutions made it equally clear that when that day of greater Lutheran unity dawns, the American Lutheran Conference will in nowise stand in the way of its realization, but will gladly give up its own entity and thank God for whatever share it has had in making the dream of a united Lutheranism in America come true.

THERE WERE also other decisions reached at Rockford which revealed how completely the American Lutheran Conference is committed to the principle of greater unity among Lutherans. One of these was the action approving the proposal of the Commission on Higher Education that the Conference co-operate in the

stablishing of a joint Lutheran graduate school of theo-gy. The need for such an institution was impressed pon the convention because of the complete demoraliza-on of Lutheran graduate schools in Europe. Lutheran raduate students are now compelled to pursue their tudies in non-Lutheran institutions in this country.

The Conference likewise instructed its Commission on ligher Education to continue its study of the feasibility f establishing a Lutheran university in co-operation vith other Lutheran groups.

Similar in character was the Conference endorsement f the preparation of a common Lutheran hymnal and ommon forms of worship. It was pointed out that four f the five constituent bodies of the Conference are al-eady collaborating with the United Lutheran Church in America in a Joint Commission which is working on a ommon hymnal, and that a similar commission has been onstituted to begin work on common liturgical forms.

Lutheran unity, therefore, means something more to he American Lutheran Conference than mere resolu-ions that dwell eloquently on the theme of friendship, ood will, and understanding. Primarily, it means a pirit of genuine humility, even self-effacement, in order hat nothing may stand in the way of the progress of the Kingdom of God. It means a willingness to meet square-y and honestly the many problems that distress the Church of Christ and that hinder its effective ministry to he children of men. It means a consuming passion and n undying zeal to further the work of the Gospel of Christ, that the Lutheran Church may fulfill its God-giv-n destiny not only in America but throughout the world.

Dr. Behnken's Address At Conference Meeting

IT WAS A gracious thing on the part of both Dr. Frank-lin C. Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, and Dr. J. W. Behnken, president of the Mis-ouri Synod, to have accepted invitations of the A-nerican Lutheran Conference to address the recent con-vention of the Conference in Rockford. The appearance f these two church leaders, representing the other two najor groups of American Lutheranism, was one of the hings that made the 8th biennial meeting of the Con-ference an historic occasion.

We only regret that Dr. Fry had no manuscript, and herefore we are unable to give our readers a report on what he said. Suffice to say that it was a sober review f the state of the Church in Europe, a recital which grip-ped his hearers and left a profound impression on their nearts and souls.

President's Behnken's address on "Fellowship among Lutherans" is printed in this issue of the LUTHERAN OUTLOOK. Those who listened to it at Rockford, as well as those who will give it careful study, will unite in paying tribute to the tremendous earnestness of its ap-peal as well as the spirit of unswerving loyalty to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions which it re-veals. With Dr. Behnken there can be no compromise with the revealed Truth of God. If the Lutheran Church is to fulfill its God-given destiny in the world, it must be true to its spiritual heritage—it must not deviate one iota from the faith once delivered unto the saints.

With this staunch Lutheran position, no member of the Church of the Reformation will find occasion to quarrel. To every such statement he will rather feel impelled to add his enthusiastic and unqualified Amen!

But that very fact becomes the real reason for our perplexity. Without fear of contradiction, we may state categorically that there is no Protestant group in America today in which there is such doctrinal agreement as there is among Lutherans. Individual deviations may, of course, be found in every Lutheran general body, but so far as official pronouncements are concerned there is basic and profound agreement. This has been attested not only in the constitutions of the various groups, but also in historic statements and declarations made by them. Likewise it is revealed in a number of theses and agreements which have been born out of inter-synodical doctrinal discussions. From the Washington Declaration and the Minneapolis Thesis down through the Pittsburgh Agreement, Brief Statement, Declaration, and Overture for Lutheran Unity there runs a spirit of unfeigned love and loyalty for the revealed Truth of God that ought to inspire a song of thanksgiving in the heart of every Lutheran.

In the case of the five constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference, we may point to the Minneapolis Theses, the Constitution of the Conference, and the Overture for Lutheran Unity as documents as uncompromising in their fidelity to the Word of God and the historic Lutheran Confessions as are any similar statements by any other Lutheran group in America. Very respectfully we might ask Dr. Behnken, Do these solemn declarations on the part of the American Lutheran Conference and its constituent bodies mean nothing to Missouri Synod? If not, the question may well be asked, How shall we be able to say *anything* that will have any real significance?

The crux of the whole problem seems to lie in this, *When* have we reached doctrinal unity? If the strivings of the various Lutheran groups along this line during the last decades have failed to achieve the desired goal, it would appear that further doctrinal discussions are futile. Those who have pursued this course in recent years have eventually made the discovery that it leads nowhere. No sooner has agreement been reached on one point than another issue is raised, a process which may be continued *ad infinitum.*

It was such an experience as this that led the American Lutheran Church at its recent convention in Appleton, Wis., to declare by resolution that "after years of effort in this direction, we despair of attaining Lutheran unity by way of additional doctrinal formulations and reformulations" and that "the adoption of the Minneapolis Theses, the Washington Declaration, the Brief Statement and Declaration, the Pittsburgh Agreement, and the Overture on Unity has demonstrated that the chief ob-

stacles to Lutheran unity are not matters of doctrine so much as differences of background, approach, spirit, attitude, and practice, which can and should be resolved in an atmosphere of candor, mutual understanding, and love."

Here it may also be stated that the American Lutheran Conference, as well as its constituent bodies, when the Overture for Lutheran Unity was adopted, definitely took the position that the official declarations of the three major groups within American Lutheranism make it clear that there already exists *essential doctrinal unity for pulpit and altar fellowship,* and, further, that *no additional theses, statements, or agreements are necessary for the establishment of such fellowship.*

If this be true—and it seems to be the consensus of opinion of at least two-thirds of American Lutheranism—what hinders the achievement of genuine fellowship between all groups? We are persuaded that the American Lutheran Church, in its Appleton resolution, placed its finger on the sore spot when it declared that "the chief obstacles to Lutheran unity are not matters of doctrine so much as differences of background, approach, spirit, attitude and practice." It is quite evident that the deep-seated misunderstandings and prejudices of past decades have left their scars, and they are not easily removed. What is needed in the Lutheran Church more than anything else today is more humility before God and more of the spirit of Christian charity toward one another. There is no group that may presume to sit as judge over their fellow Lutherans as to the degree of their loyalty to the Word of God or the sincerity of their motives and purposes. And when it comes to matters of practice, there are evidently so many inconsistencies within *every* Lutheran group, even on such an issue as the lodge question, that it ill behooves any group to cast stones at another.

This, perhaps, is the most hopeful thing about "A Statement" signed a year ago by more than forty outstanding Missouri pastors and theologians. When more of this spirit of genuine self-examination and humble repentance reveals itself throughout the Lutheran Church of America, the dawn of the day of true unity and understanding will be at hand.

Stavig Is Honored With Presidency

ELECTION of Dr. L. M. Stavig as president of the American Lutheran Conference at the Rockford convention was a fitting recognition of the outstanding service rendered by him to the Conference. It was at Racine, Wis., in 1938 that Dr. Stavig became the secretary of the Conference, a position which he filled with such distinction and efficiency that he was thrice re-elected. He brings to his new task, therefore, a wealth of knowledge and experience concerning the inner workings of the Conference, and will undoubtedly prove to be as good a president as he has been a secretary.

Following the unwritten law of the Conference that no president shall serve more than two terms, Dr. Harold L. Yochum, who has held that position since 1942, automatically retired this year. Dr. Yochum's executive gifts are well known and widely recognized. While serving as president of the Conference, he was also president of the Michigan District of the American Lutheran Church, a position which he recently resigned in order to become president of the Capital University of Columbus, O., the largest of the institutions of the American Lutheran Church.

Dr. Yochum has given the Conference four years of wise and far-sighted leadership. His frequent contributions to the LUTHERAN OUTLOOK during the last four years have done much to shape the thinking of the Conference and have revealed Dr. Yochum not only as a scholar but also as a church statesman of high calibre. The Conference is indeed grateful to him for the service he has rendered the Church and it wishes him much joy and satisfaction in the new sphere of labor into which he has entered.

Myron Taylor Is Back at Vatican

MYRON C. TAYLOR is back at the Vatican. He left on November 23 for what President Truman described as a mission of "short duration, not exceeding 30 days." Mr. Truman declared that Mr. Taylor's aim as on previous visits to Rome, will be to "obtain for my guidance the counsel and co-operation of all men and women of good will, whether in religion, government, or in the pursuits of every day life."

Taylor, who was former chairman of the United States Steel Corporation, was first named as a special representative to the Vatican by President Roosevelt in December 1939, and when Truman came into office the arrangement was continued. Reacting to strong protests from Protestants against the maintenance of a diplomatic representative at the seat of the Roman Catholic Church President Truman early this year made it clear that Mr. Taylor would not longer act in that capacity after peace comes.

American Protestants are now beginning to wonder how soon peace will come.

Missionaries in Mass Exodus to Orient

IN THE MIDST of all the disheartening and tragic events which have followed in the wake of World War II, there is at least one circumstance that shines like a bright star in the night, calling on Christians to lift up their heads and rejoice. It is the mass return of hundreds of foreign missionaries to their former fields, accompanied by other hundreds of new volunteers who

ave caught the vision of the primary place of world-vide missions in the program of the Church.

In the latter part of September the emergency class ion-reconverted troop ship *Marine Lynx,* sailed from San Francisco with 400 missionaries on board, bound for Manila, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. Now the *Marine Lynx* has returned to these shores, and on December 15 t started back to the Orient with 670 missionaries for he same ports of call. A third sailing of the vessel is planned early in 1947, according to a statement issued by the Foreign Missions Conference of North America.

In addition to this, the *Marine Falcon* left San Fran-isco on December 21 for Singapore, Madras, and Bom-bay with 250 missionaries on its passenger list. Large numbers of missionaries have also been leaving Atlantic eaports for Africa and other fields, but there have been no mass sailings equal to those on the Pacific coast.

If any blessing can come out of such a dreadful catas-rophe as World War II, it will be a deeper appreciation of the tremendous influence of foreign missions. Our ighting men were given a firsthand glimpse of what the Gospel has done for the backward races of the earth, and many of them came back home convinced that nothing is quite so important in this day of utter chaos and confu-ion as the bringing of Christ to the nations.

The foreign missionary will no longer be caricatured as an impractical visionary and dreamer who wastes his ife on a desolate island trying to convert cannibals to ive as does the white man. Rather, he will be pictured as a hero, the advance agent of civilization, the friend and champion of the oppressed, and the ambassador of good will, friendship, and peace to all peoples. Above all this, he will be recognized as a man who has a message, the only message that has the power to transform men's hearts and lives and to make them instruments of righte-ousness rather than iniquity.

That's why we say that the sailing of these hundreds of missionaries for foreign fields is the most hopeful sign of our day. But they are still only a handful. They must be augmented with other thousands and still more housands until the Church can truly say it has heeded he command of its divine Head to preach the Gospel to every creature.

America Asks Release Of All War Prisoners

ALTHOUGH it comes at a very late hour, the Ameri-can government at last has indicated that it will not continue to be a party to some of the inhumane prac-ces of the victor nations which have grown out of the ate war. On December 5 Secretary of State Byrnes an-nounced that this government has demanded of France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg that 674,000 German prisoners of war which our Army turned over to those countries as slave laborers be released and return-ed to Germany by October 1, 1947. He disclosed that Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg had agreed to the proposal, but that France had not yet replied.

In making the announcement, the State Department revealed that 620,000 of the prisoners taken by American troops had been turned over to the French, while Bel-gium received 40,000, the Netherlands 10,000, and Lux-emburg 4,000.

In excusing this traffic in human beings, the American statement asserted that "in the closing days of the war the number of German soldiers made prisoners of war increased to such an extent as to present a serious prob-lem behind our lines, and the transfer was made to re-lieve this situation." However, it has been openly charg-ed without contradiction that most of the prisoners, in-cluding some arrested after the cessation of hostilities in violation of the Geneva Convention, were turned over to the four countries after the German surrender.

The Byrnes statement also revealed that the American forces in Europe still held 96,000 German prisoners, but declared they will be released at an early date. How many German prisoners are held by the British and the Russians as slave laborers is not known, but they are be-lieved to number several millions. The French also hold large numbers of prisoners in addition to those turned over to them by the Americans.

The action of the American State Department is anoth-er moral victory for the Christian Churches of this country. Through the church press and by official reso-lutions, the Churches have unceasingly criticized the use of prisoners of war as slave laborers as a throwback to the inhuman practices of ancient warfare. As recently as November 14 the American Section of the Lutheran World Federation issued a strongly-worded statement de-claring that without a "clear and constructive policy" to-ward prisoners of war, attempts to reeducate and rehabi-litate the German people "will be doomed to failure." Lack of such a policy, it was pointed out, may make "the conquered feel that the 'justice' for which the United Nations fought was but an empty word, a propaganda de-vice, and not the expression of a sincere desire for a bet-ter world."

The Lutheran statement also urged the Allied govern-ments to accelerate the release of prisoners and "to speci-fy when, how, and in what order of priority their repatri-ation will be organized." It also demanded that all pris-oners of war, whether workers or not, "may be assured of receiving the minimum amount of food, clothing, and medical care needed for the maintenance of life and health."

The Churches will applaud their government for tak-ing the initiative in bringing about an end to slave labor; but they should not discontinue their efforts until Brit-ain, Russia, and France have also returned to the prac-tices of Christian civilization.

A recent front-page editorial in the *Chicago-Tribune*

demanded of the American Congress an American foreign policy in which these principles shall be upheld:

"No more starving of children, no more robbing of civilians, no more raping of women, no more slave labor, no more oppression of natives in the Orient and of helpless people in Europe."

No matter whether they agree with all the conclusions of this newspaper or not, Christians everywhere will add their "amen" to this forthright declaration. Human civilization cannot endure unless there be common decency in the world.

JUSTICE IN OUR TIMES

A TWENTY-YEAR old girl was arrested the other day in New Jersey and charged with disorderly conduct for thumbing a ride. Beyond saying that her name was Susan Bower she refused to give any further information about herself and, after having been held by the police for about three weeks without benefit of legal counsel, she was sentenced to six months in prison.

Aroused by the extremity of this sentence citizens of New Jersey, jurists and the press raised such a furor that the girl was granted a new hearing and subsequently released. The Attorney General of New Jersey summed up the position of everyone defending Miss Bower by saying, "The rights of this girl should be protected the same as the rights of any other citizen." And the *New York World-Telegram,* which published at least two editorials on the case, said that taking away six months of Miss Bower's freedom was "nothing less than a disgusting and flagrant abuse of police and judicial power."

And thus it happened that an unknown girl, without friends, and presumably in a part of the country strange to her, found herself defended against the State by people of influence and power who had never heard of her before and who knew little about her except that she was a human being whose freedom had been placed in jeopardy and whose rights, in their judgment, were being violated.

This is an example of American society operating true to form and at a very high level. Did the same concern for human rights obtain in all instances where they are threatened and violated we should have little reason to be concerned for the future of our country.

Unfortunately, such is not the case. Of the many instances that might be cited to prove it, none stands out more glaringly than the murder in cold blood of four Negroes by an armed mob in Georgia last July. The perpetrators of this crime against human life and freedom have not been brought to justice. Is it because their victims were Negroes? Should that matter? They were human beings to whom life was precious, whose rights and freedom should have been precious to all. This alone should matter. For, as the moral law of God declares, human rights belong to men as members of the human race. Human rights are not reserved for some men of a particular color, religion, or national origin.

To see this issue clearly, to understand that until all men in America are secure in their rights no one is secure in his own, to contend with all our strength for justice for the oppressed whoever they may be and whatever they may be, is America's high calling for responsibility. If we fail here, where else, in all the world, can a haven for liberty be found?

William C. Kernan

New York City

TO THEM THAT ASK HIM

By Walter C. Riess
Detroit, Michigan

FADING with fleeting day, my dreams grew old;
They watched an anxious boy's fond hopes expire.
Darkness pressed heavy, and sin's thickening cold
Froze my failing soul's once flaming fire.

I groped through darkness in my will to find
The throbbing warmth that measured youth's short day.
The Bible opened to my stumbling mind:
A Saviour said, "My son, learn how to pray."

Could I describe the balm that soothed my heart,
Or paint the hand that made a spirit whole?
Ah, there are comforts that are drawn apart
From man's frail thought! God touched my soul!

One World--God's World

Convention Sermon, American Lutheran Conference

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By Harold L. Yochum
President of the Conference

Based on Acts 17:24-31

WHEN THE LATE Wendell Willkie made his tour of observation around the world in the fall of 1942 and shortly thereafter wrote his little book entitled "One World," he popularized a phrase which current events have made increasingly significant. There was nothing particularly novel about the idea, which has been discussed by philosophers for centuries and which is clearly presented in our Holy Scriptures. Yet the course of recent history, the phenomenal acceleration of means of travel and communication, the increasing dependence of nations upon resources found in distant lands, and the global aspects of World War II have invested this phrase with a special significance peculiar to our day.

There are good reasons why we should stress the spiritual and moral implications of this concept in a day when people generally think in terms of the materialistic and mundane. As we provide physical and spiritual aid to the victims of "wild war's desolation" in countries across the oceans, this phrase takes on new meaning for all of us. Even our policies and relationships here at home are vitally affected by developments abroad, involving Lutheran World Action, the Lutheran World Federation, and the World Council of Churches. Our program of foreign missions is energized by a fresh interest and appreciation on the part of our people generally.

But while we look around us with an unprecedented telescopic vision and recognize how near all nations are to one another, we also look upward and realize as never before how near God is to His world, how near all this one world is to God. Against the backgrund of a global war and the dark portents of what may lie in the future we sense as never before the scope of God's purposes and dealings with His world and our utter dependence upon Him.

With these considerations in mind we have planned the program of this convention and worded our convention theme. You will note that the five devotional services develop the theme, "One World . . . God's World"—by creation, by redemption, by His work through the Church, by His hand in history, and by the final consummation. The featured addresses are related to our convention theme and all our discussions will reflect some of its implications.

In this opening convention sermon I have studiously refrained from infringing on the specific topics assigned to our main speakers and our leaders in devotion, yet endeavored to provide a background for their presentations in my development of our theme,

"One World . . . God's World"

As the spirit of Paul's eloquent sermon at Athens indicates, this was not merely a philosophical dissertation about such general ideas as God and man and the world. It was intensely personal, it dealt with personal relationships. That fits our interests and our needs at this convention. As we study Paul's inspired message about one world, God's world, we may clarify our thinking about the relationship of God to the world, the relationship of man to God, and the relationship of man to the world.

God and the World

There are many people who have only a very vague notion of God's relationship to the world. When you speak to them of the world, of one world, they think first in terms of geography. But certainly "the world" must mean far more than a globe of earth with its land and water and atmosphere. Geography and geology, botany and zoology will not sufficiently explain the concept of one world. Likewise we shall not grasp the full import of this phrase if we limit our thinking to anthropology and sociology, or political science and economics.

Just as one could best visualize the true shape and unity of the world by rising high into the stratosphere and from that vantage point looking down upon this terrestrial ball, so one must raise the ceiling of his thinking as high as God himself if he would truly appreciate all that "one world" implies. Theology is as pertinent to the understanding of that concept as any of the studies just mentioned. And I submit that there is nothing man needs more urgently to know about this one world today than God's relationship to the world. It is because man has tried to crowd God out of the world to all intents and purposes that he has made so many unnecessary mistakes with such tragic consequences.

Human Philosophies That Persist

The very same basic philosophies with which Paul had to contend in ancient Athens dominate the thinking of most people to this very day. There are those who like the Stoics magnify wisdom and reason and exalt human pride. They give some credence to vague ideas about a Supreme Being and are very tolerant of the religious and ethical views of others. They set up for themselves standards of conduct and a rationale of life which they consider quite adequate for their needs. In their thinking the relationship of God to the world is rather remote and of no particular importance. Then there are those who like the Epicureans put pleasure and enjoyment of life above all other considerations. They think in purely materialistic terms and exclude the supernatural from the realm of reality. Virtues and morals are but relative and their conduct is governed largely by expediency. In grossly sensual or somewhat more refined fashion they indulge their natural desires.

It is the difficult task of Christians today to do what Paul tried to do, convince these heathen of the relevant reality of God, of His vital relationship with this world. And if with all his ardent zeal and tactful eloquence St. Paul could not succeed in his historic attempt at Athens, obviously we cannot hope to influence others by the lack of conviction and ability to witness effectively to our faith which characterizes so many members of our churches. What a challenge to our program of parish education, of higher Christian education, of evangelism, of missions at home and abroad! What a rebuke to our weak readiness to compromise with atheistic, materialistic, secularizing tendencies around us, perverting both doctrine and morals.

As we this morning partake of the body of Christ, given for us, of His blood shed for the remission of our sins, we are reminded of the intimate relationship of God with His world, expressed most convincingly in the incarnation of His Son, who was willing to become one of us to save us, by whom "God was reconciling the world unto himself." Sacred Scripture is throughout the record of God's unchanging concern for His world, His supreme and unfathomable providence and dominion. In His own wisdom He has ordained the boundaries and destinies of nations, weaving the good and the evil of mankind into the design that serves His purposes. May this convention enable us to reckon more realistically with the relationship of God to His world and to interpret it more effectively to others.

The Absurdity of Idolatry

We find in these words of St. Paul some significant comments on man's relationship to God which further illuminate the phrase, "One world . . . God's world." In somewhat more subtle fashion than that employed by the Psalmist and by Isaiah, Paul demonstrates the absurdity of idolatry. By what process of reasoning do men imagine that they can make a god, or that any god worthy of the name is dependent on them for a shrine, for food, for attention? It is rather the other way 'round: man is dependent on God for all the needs of body and soul. It is God who has given man his existence and graciously provides for the necessities of life.

What a thrill it is for the godly scientist to explore the marvelous structure of the world, the amazing wealth of resources, the stupendous sources of power which God has made available for man's use and which we have been so slow to discover and develop! What excuse is there, in the face of all this, for man to boast of his accomplishments and to think that he is doing God a favor when he deigns to offer God a few crumbs of his wealth and a few hours of his time? One sometimes wonders how many of our church members really know the true God and worship Him, how many others pay their respects to some mental image of God which is the product of their own creating. Not only the heathen, but also many of our professed Christians need Paul's clear picture of our relationship to God as His creatures, utterly dependent on Him, saved from ruin alone by Him, able to achieve nobility and render some modest service of gratitude alone through His enabling grace.

God Must Find Man

How skillfully St. Paul tries to pare away the hard, callous philosophy which his hearers had developed and thus reach the sensitive nerve of that normal instinct within man that aches for a vital union with God. Our sons and brothers who have returned from journeys into far places while in uniform describe strange scenes and customs; but they tell us that everywhere they went people had some form of worship. God has not left himself without His witnesses in nature and deep within the spirit of man, as well as His activity in the course of history, all of which should impel men to seek God, to grope after Him, to try to lay hold of Him. Familiar to all of us is Augustine's classic plea, "Our souls were made for Thee, O God, nor shall they ever find their rest except in Thee." But the grammatical form Paul uses in this sentence, "that they might feel after him and find him," is only too accurate, indicating a hope left unfulfilled, an effort bound to be unsuccessful. It is only when God comes to us in the revelation of himself that we find Him; it is only when He gives himself to us that we lay hold of Him.

Plato and others got as close to God as man's power will ever get; God had to disclose himself to man through the inspired Scriptures and through His Son that we might enjoy a blessed union and fellowship with Him. Can we find ways to awaken in a worldly-minded generation that deep, inner longing for God? Can we find ways to hold up before the eyes of a generation blinded by unbelief and sin God's clear revelation of himself in the Word made flesh and in the Word that testifies of Him?

The Glory of Divine Worship

Paul then rises to the high level of designating us as God's own children, quoting words from ancient Greek

poetry and infusing into them the profound meaning those words must have for a Christian. He never got far enough to name that unique Son of God by whom we receive the adoption which gives us the right to call God our Father and ourselves His children. But you and I understand, if this sublime truth can be understood, that only by a rebirth can we become the children of God. Here is the true measure of man's worth, a far higher evaluation of ourselves than the proudest unbeliever can conceive. "Behold, what maner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"

What nobler service can any of us render to his fellow man than to show him how he can attain that highest destiny and blessing, to become a son of God? What greater privilege can any of us ask than to be God's spokesman to others, calling them to repentance and faith? And if the multitude in the public square laugh at us when we speak of such things, there may be for us as there was for Paul some responsive man or woman whose salvation is rich reward for our disappointment and embarrassment.

We gather here for worship, for fellowship, for work, for this Holy Communion, as brothers, sons of God. May we feel the presence of our heavenly Father, enjoy His blessing, and strengthen our relationship to Him as His sons.

Unity of Human Race

We study these words of St. Paul yet once more for what they tell us about the relationship of man to the world, this one world, God's world. We are intrigued by the bold declaration, "And he made from one every nation of men to live on the face of the earth." Whether we prefer a variant reading, "And he made from one blood every nation of man," or the translation I have quoted makes no real difference. The unity of the human race is here proclaimed in unmistakable language. All of us are descendants of that first man, whom God created. The fundamental unity and equality of all peoples is Scriptural truth, which is more compelling than to argue that it is a scientifically attested fact.

Those proud Athenians cherished the delusion that they had a separate origin, that they had sprung from the earth of their own fatherland, that they were superior to other peoples. That same absurd idea was held by other ancient nations, and was belatedly advanced by the Nazi leaders of Germany. Only a foolish nationalistic or racial pride will explain the popularity of this superiority myth among supposedly edcuated people. There is no room for such notion in our Christian beliefs. This brief statement of Paul rebukes many a member in our congregations who nourishes racial and nationalistic prejudices and antipathies, stubbornly refusing to let even the Holy Spirit change his wrong attitudes. Even the history of the American Lutheran Conference bears traces of over-emotional loyalties to original nationalistic backgrounds and mutual distrust and resentment arising from nationalistic tensions. It seems to take a lot of the Spirit's sanctifying grace to rid our hearts of this irrational and unscriptural perversity. On the other hand we can justly credit our association in the American Lutheran Conference with being both a testimony that we have risen above such wrong sentiments and a means of breaking down these barriers more completely.

When Men Try to Play God

In the light of the statement, "having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their habitation," we shall not be so quick to charge an entire nation with war guilt or leave a stricken people to suffer starvation. We can no more insist that we have no responsibility for the welfare of other nations than we can attribute their fate to an arbitrary will of God. What frightful injustices and sufferings result when victorious nations enslave or evict whole populations, as Germany did during the war and Russia is doing now! Ruthless oppressors presume to play god and to order the course of history and the destiny of nations. Our own ineffectual policy of dealing with the problem of the reconstruction of Germany gives us little cause for self-satisfaction. Is not much of our trouble due to our unwillingness to interpret history in line with the principle enunciated by St. Paul at Athens?

God as Final Judge of World

Finally, shall we not share Paul's recognition of the fact that the whole world must eventually come under the judgment of God, with the crucified and resurrected Christ as the only hope of justification? Men have generally been quick to judge one another but slow to recognize the implications of God's universal judgment at the end of this world-age. Would any of us deliberately choose to cling to what we know will be destroyed and forfeit our own salvation thereby? This is exactly what millions of men and women are doing. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," St. John warns. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Again and again God tries to recall those who have attached their affections to the world, not God's world but the wicked world which has rebelled against God and resisted Him. Yet so many foolishly try to love both God and the world; they want "all this, and heaven, too!" Our people need constant admonition that they may not enter into a wrong relationship with the world.

Sharing God's Pity for World

But our concern as we think of the impending judgment is not to be only for our own security. Surely we

must share God's pity for the whole world. As universal as man's sin is the saving grace of God. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God"—"Who will have all men to be saved, coming to the knowledge of the truth." Sin knows no color line, no race superiority, no nationalistic supremacy; nor does God's judgment; nor does His saving grace; nor dare our Christian love.

The concept, "One world . . God's world," should therefore stir our hearts to earnest examination of ourselves, our congregations, our synodical bodies, our Conference, and all of Christianity. We have sins of which we should repent; we have obligations which we must recognize at last and strive honestly to fulfil. Such self-examination, such high resolves are in order as we come to the Lord's table this day. May this holy communion of true believers make us more sensitive to the needs of others in the world and help us to have right relationships with the world.

Just a few days ago I heard the secretary of the United States Department of Commerce, Mr. Harriman, make the statement that our country has only about six percent of the world's total population but over half of the world's total production capacity. What significance that fact gives to the phrase, "one world," in terms of economics! Who will attempt to compare the percentage of world Lutheranism and world Christendom there is in our country with the potential of rehabilitation and service and missionary enterprise which we possess? O God, give us an adequate sense of our responsibility in this global crisis! Help us to see aright this "one world," Thy world! Amen.

The Case of Niemoeller

By David L. Ostergren
Former U. S. Chaplain in Italy

PASTOR MARTIN NIEMOELLER has just arrived in this country and for that reason some of your readers may need to have corrected an erroneous impression of him that was derived from a press interview in the Spring of 1945 in Naples, Italy.

When Pastor Niemoeller came to Naples he was rather thin and emaciated as the result of nearly eight years of concentration camp. His suffering was of a mental nature rather than physical. This made him somewhat nervous, tense, and easily upset.

Simultaneously with the arrival in this country of Martin Niemoeller, who was confined to German concentration camps for eight years because of his opposition to Hitler's regime, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt carried an item in her newspaper column stating that it was her understanding that Niemoller opposed the Nazis because of what they did to the Churches, but that he had no quarrel with them politically. In Seattle, Wash., where Niemoeller addressed the Federal Council of Churches, the biennial gathering of that body adopted by unanimous vote a resolution calling on Mrs. Roosevelt to "correct the erroneous impressions created by your column" and stating that the delegates to the Council "deeply regret the misinformation on which your remarks about Pastor Niemoller are based." It was the second time Mrs. Roosevelt had attacked the German pastor in her column. Now comes former Chaplain David L. Ostergren, who is now studying for his Ph.D. at Columbia University, and tells the real facts concerning the infamous press interview in Naples in 1945 which gave rise to the criticisms voiced by Mrs. Roosevelt and others.—The Editor.

I spent considerable time with Pastor Niemoeller (he prefers to be called Pastor) during his month's stay in Naples. The pastor and I normally breakfasted together, after which he would walk to work with me. Nearly every evening about 10 o'clock we would get together for a chat before retiring. These visits afforded me a chance to know him quite intimately. He is a very kind man, has a remarkable sense of humor and is excellent company. He is also of a genuinely humble nature. When we in Naples tried to make a hero of him, he denied that he had suffered greatly and said that there were many who had suffered much more than he.

Difficult to Catch Questions

On the day of his interview with the press I dined with him as usual. He was a bit nervous because he was afraid that his English would be inadequate for the forthcoming interview. He had learned English by reading books in the concentration camp. He could speak the language well, but had difficulty in grasping its meaning when spoken to. I was with him the first time he ever gave a talk in English. He had very little difficulty in speaking, but had more difficulty in understanding questions that were put to him after his talk.

I could not attend the press interview due to my duties as a chaplain, but I did see Pastor Niemoeller in the evening and asked him the results of the interview. He did not criticize the press, but did say that he was bewildered by all the questions put to him. Furthermore, he was disappointed in that he had been unable to explain his thoughts in his own way.

Correspondents Heckled Him

I then spoke to one of the American officers who was present at the interview. He said, "It was a shame the way the reporters heckled Pastor Niemoeller. They shot questions at the man right and left and finally got him all

mixed up. It was the most unfair interview any man could be given."

This interview was widely publicized in the American press. One can readily understand that the picture of Niemoeller resulting from such an interview would be greatly distorted. The focal point of the misunderstanding to Pastor Niemoeller concerned his relation to Nazisome for religious reasons. My reasons for opposing National Socialism?" He answered "For religious reasons." The reporters did not follow up this answer with, "What do you mean by religious reasons?" They assumed that Pastor Niemoeller was referring to Hitler's persecution of the Church and asked questions concerning this persecution. From this line of questioning the idea was imparted to America that the only reason Pastor Niemoller opposed Hitlerism was because the Church was persecuted. In other words, America was led to believe that Niemoeller held no grievance against Hitlerism; that he was a Nazi at heart.

Any one who has been interviewed by the press, especially if he is unfamiliar with the language and methods of reporters, can well understand how easy it is to give a wrong impression. Pastor Niemoeller was simply the victim of circumstances over which he had no control.

What He Really Meant

Subsequently, I asked him, "What did you mean when you said that you opposed National Socialism for religious reasons?"

He replied, "Some people oppose National Socialism for political reasons, some for economic reasons, and some for religious reasons. My reasons for oppsing National Socialism were religious. They include all the above reasons and go deeper than any of them. For example, National Socialism encouraged socialization of marriage, wherein a Nazi was encouraged to have children not only with his wife but with other women as well, in order to build up the manpower of Germany. This violated the commandment, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' National Socialism took over property in a way that could be called nothing else than stealing. This violated the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal.' Without cause, National Socialism cruelly murdered Jews and many others. This violated the commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill.'

"National Socialism disregarded the sacredness of the individual. The individual had no importance of his own. He was important only in so far as he made a contribution to the State. This violated one of the central doctrines of Christianity, namely, the sacredness of human personality. Thus you can see what I meant by 'religious reasons'."

Hitler Offered Him Freedom

I then asked Pastor Niemoeller, "Did Hitler ever offer to release you?" His answer was, "Yes, after I had been in prison for several years, they brought me a paper to sign. By signing the paper I would have promised not to speak against National Socialism any more. If I had signed the paper I would have been freed from the concentration camp. Although I wanted with all my heart to be with my family, I could not do that. Freedom would have been sweet; but it was more important for my country, Germany, to oppose National Socialism. I told them, 'I will not sign.' "

Here is a man who would rather suffer solitary confinement and possible death than to betray a principle. To call him a Nazi at heart, or even imply a sympathetic attitude toward National Socialism would be not only unfair, it would be cruel.

Pastor Niemoeller is exceedingly frank and outspoken, and for that reason might easily be misunderstood as the result of a hasty and confusing press interview. However, American Christianity should be very reluctant to charge this man with moral acquiesence with Nazi principles which the facts of his life deny.

These Three

By Julius H. Bodensieck*

Protestant Liaison Representative Between the American Military Government in Germany and the German Evangelical Church

I HAVE FOUND in Germany among the leaders as well as the members of the Church an unconquerable *faith;* a faith which puts to shame my own weak and wavering faith; a new and vital faith; a heroic—no rather a childlike, immediate, plain, simple trust in God and confidence in Christ as the Saviour; a faith which comes very close to the faith which we find in the first century of our era among the apostles and other early disciples of the Lord. Practically all visible supports have been withdrawn from the Church; most of the church buildings are lying in ruins; the outlook, humanly speaking, is very gloomy. But through the darkness shines the faith of our brethren in really baffling splendor. The German Church has returned to the last, solid citadel, to God.

Evidences of this faith may be observed everywhere. I have noted especially the sermons preached today. There is nothing abstruse and theoretical in them, they

* Dr. Bodensieck, who is president of Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Ia., is on leave in Germany to carry out his new commission.

are positive testimonies to the all-sufficiency of God's grace and the one great absolute need of forgiveness of sins; they have the full ring of genuinely biblical, evangelical faith; they gripped me inwardly and made me happy in the fellowship of faith with the German brethren. The people listen, interestedly, attentively, not merely for ten or fifteen minutes but 45 or even 60 minutes, as the pastor unfolds the wonders of God's grace. They sing with fervor and devotion, and take an intelligent part in the service.

Faith Regains Its Basic Place

Yes, faith has regained its basic place in the life of the Church, and it is genuinely Biblical faith. In numerous private conversations, with pastors and laymen, with church leaders, bishops and councilors, as well as the plain and poor people in the street, I have found this new note of faith. The old liberalism or rationalism which has produced many ugly excrescences and had reached its absurd climax in the movement known as "German Christians," with its perversion of everything really Christian,—this old caricature of Christianity has gone definitely. It was swept away by the storms of adversity and pain, and it is found no more. Instead we observe everywhere the beautiful, lovely, strong, firm Gospel faith. Christ is not merely nominally but actually the center of the Church's life.

Is it not because all else was taken from them, because they had to be reduced to nothing because there was absolutely no help any more anywhere; is it not because of the utter failure of man and his strength that our brethren have now found this marvelous surrender to God, this magnificent faith? Should we not actually envy them for their terrible anguish and their poverty if these awful experiences helped them to find their Saviour?

And There Is Hope

And I have found much *hope* among these tired, ill-fed, ill-dressed brethren of ours. Hope among the piles of rubble everywhere, among these grimacing ruins, hollow houses, gaping holes, where everything reminds one of the splendors of the past ages and their beauties which are shattered and gone? Hope—when there are so few church buildings left, so many men still in military imprisonment, so many happy existences crushed, so many tender flowers broken? Hope—when it would be much easier to despair, to let things go as they may, to wait for another even more terrible war, to become indifferent to the present needs and to give up? Yes, in spite of everything, true hope is living in many hearts of Germany today.

Look, my friend, you would not even begin to clear away the dust and dirt and rubble if you did not have the hope that it is possible to improve conditions. Every action undertaken in the direction of rebuilding Germany's moral and religious structure is an act of hope. Whoever assists in church work today has a hopeful outlook. He hopes that God will again bless His Church and its work in Germany; and that the Church will exercise its saving functions within the land. When 7,000 young met meet at Esslingen near Stuttgart for a day of thorough Bible study and true Christian fellowship; or when hundreds of returned prisoners of war (whose homes have been destroyed) under competent direction begin to build a Christian settlement near Frankfurt; or when 50 physicians and scientists meet for a week in Hanover to discuss the place of Christianity in life; when pastors and laymen everywhere are busy studying the best possible ways of establishing the Church's life and dig deep down into the Word of God to discover the real foundations of faith and life, and determine to be guided by nothing but Christ's word and example—are not all these isolated events and acts proofs of the existence of a great, throbbing, moving, living hope?

I envy a Church with a burning hope! This hope that characterizes Germany's Evangelical Church today is based on nothing but Christ and His mercy! It does not care to mention past performances; it does not rely on help from foreign lands; it does not wish to boast of the suffering that has been endured; no , it is hope in the undeserved mercy of a loving Saviour who will cover our sins when we are sorry for them and confess them, and who will give us eyes to see His glory, ears to catch His comforting and strengthening assurances, and hands that do those tasks which are assigned to us. It is hope in the everlasting grace of Jesus Christ that casts this mysterious glow of beauty upon our poor and harassed brethren.

And There Is Love

And the third characteristic feature of Germany's Evangelical Church today is its positively amazing life of love and charity. The far-flung activities of Evangelisches Hilfswerk are largely financed by the German Evangelical Christians themselves; the amounts given by organizations and churches outside of Germany are small in comparison with the sums offered by the Christians of Germany themselves. The churches have not only taken care of their own fellow nationals when they were evacuated from the cities which were in danger of destruction, but have done a marvelous piece of work even when their own cities were demolished by concentrated obliteration bombings, when cities like Hanover, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, etc., were destroyed to an extent of 50 to 75 per cent and the available space in which to care for the homeless refugees decreased at an alarming rate, and when still larger members of expelles and refugees continued to pour into the western half of Germany. Evangelisches Hilfswerk, under the most able direction of dynamic Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier, is so well organized that one can only marvel. This Hilfswerk is not the activity of a society, but it represents the whole Church; it is the Church in action, the Church proving its life, demonstrating that it is the Church of Christ, who said that God is love.

Do we have to be cast into the furnace of affliction in order to learn the practice of Christian love? Perhaps we can truly love another person only when we have suffered together and have been comforted alike by the same Saviour. If so, how blessed is the Church in Evangelical Germany for its deep and frightful agony because under the gracious guidance of the Holy Spirit such beautiful evidences of Christian love are continually coming to light!

Love casts out fear, love levels all distinctions of rank and social standing. Love is eternal. Love is divine. Love is the greatest of these.

My eyes burn from looking upon desolation, and my courage fails me when I think of the tremendous work that lies ahead. But I need not fear, for God is in the midst of His Church, and it shall not be moved but become glorious indeed if it keeps on this path of faith, hope, and charity,—these three.

Fellowship among Lutherans

An Address to the American Lutheran Conference

By J. W. Behnken
President of Missouri Synod

THE INVITATION of your program committee to speak to the American Lutheran Conference on the topic, "Fellowship among Lutherans," reached me last week. I have been requested to speak very frankly on this vital and important issue. This is a topic which has been under discussion for almost a century. During the past decade this matter again occupied the intensive attention of Lutherans in America. However, though some progress was made in certain sections, unity has not been achieved. Everyone deeply regrets this and is willing to contribute everything within his power toward its accomplishment. For that reason I rejoice to be given an opportunity to speak on this important question and set forth what we of the Missouri Synod consider essential toward the accomplishment of fellowship among Lutherans.

The biennial convention of the American Lutheran Conference in Rockford, Ill., November 13-15, was featured by the appearance on the program of Dr. J. W. Behnken, president of the Missouri Synod, and Dr. Franklin C. Fry, president of the United Lutheran Church in America. It was the first time in the history of the Conference that the executives of the other two major Lutheran bodies in America had appeared at a convention. Dr. Behnken's address on "Fellowship among Lutherans" is given here in full. Dr. Fry, who spoke the following day on the plight of the Lutheran Church in Europe, had no manuscript.—The Editor.

We must know exactly what we mean by the term "fellowship." We are now not speaking about social fellowship. Nor do we have in mind so-called intellectual fellowship. We mean religious fellowship. Let me narrow it down even more than that. We do not have in mind the fellowship of all believers, a fellowship which binds together all Christians by faith in Christ, a fellowship which embraces all the saints in heaven and every believer on earth, a fellowship which has been called the *una sancta,* the communion of saints, the invisible Church. In the discussion before us we are speaking about a fellowship between Lutherans belonging to visible churches, a fellowship between Lutheran church bodies, a fellowship which has been termed pulpit, altar and prayer fellowship.

It is a pity that the Lutheran Church is so divided. No person interested in the Lutheran Church can remain indifferent about this. To Lutherans has been granted the heritage of *Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide.* Through the remarkable work of His servant Luther, God brought to light again Scriptural truth and Scriptural practice. As a result the Lutheran Church enjoys an incomparably glorious blessing. But how must it affect the heart of Jesus, when He beholds such disunity and dissension among the people unto whom He has entrusted the marvelous blessings of the Reformation. Similarly it affects many thousand Lutherans. It hurts; it cuts deep gashes; it makes the heart bleed to think that, in view of the unparalleled heritage of the Reformation, Lutherans should be so divided.

NINETY YEARS ago negotiations were undertaken to bring Lutherans in America together on the basis of clear-cut Scriptural doctrine: They found their origin in the question propounded by the sainted Dr. Walther in *Lehre und Wehre,* in January, 1856, whether a meeting could not be arranged between all Lutheran Synods which acknowledge and confess the unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530 as the pure and correct interpretation of Holy Writ. The purpose was to be the possible establishment of one united Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America. The suggestion found favor. The *Lutheran Standard* then issued a call for such a meeting. This call was published by all English, Norwegian, and German language periodicals which were friendly to the cause. As a result, meetings were conducted in Columbus, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Cleveland, Ohio, and Fort Wayne, Indiana, each lasting a number of days. One article after the other of the Augsburg Confession was thoroughly discussed. The minutes of the very first meeting held in Trinity Church in Columbus states clear-

ly that those present sought to assure themselves that all present were one in faith and confession and that they actually subscribed to the various articles, not only in their essential and substantial parts, but in all features according to the very wording of the articles.

This is the essential requisite for wholesome and God-pleasing fellowship among Lutherans today. There must be genuine unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Only if Lutherans build on this foundation will the structure of Lutheranism stand. It will crumble and fall if the foundation is faulty and defective. That is the position of the Missouri Synod today. We are vitally interested in the cause of Lutheran fellowship. We pray for it. We want to put forth every effort toward its achievement. However, it must be on sound, solid, Scriptural foundations.

I realize that we have been accused of over-emphasizing the need of doctrinal unity, but you cannot get away from the fact that the Word of God throughout emphasizes doctrinal unity. The history of the early Christian Church clearly shows what emphasis was placed upon doctrinal unity. God-appointed leaders in the Apostolic Church issued earnest warnings against false doctrines. Read the Ecumenical Creeds, especially the Athanasian Creed, and note the precise and exact language used. There can be no doubt that the early Church sought to safeguard soundness of doctrine. Or think of the Lutheran Confessions. Much time and effort were spent to express things so definitely and precisely that there should be no understanding. Think especially of the Formula of Concord. Years were spent in its formulation before it was adopted. Then, however, it settled the controversial issues, removed the dissension and safeguarded sound Biblical doctrine. Even so today the paramount need is that Lutherans wholeheartedly and consecratedly unite on the basis of sound Biblical doctrine. Such agreement and unity must be reached, not only between official committees but also out in the field between pastors and between members of our congregations.

There are those who have grown tired of doctrinal discussions. Some have claimed that we have unity since Lutherans in America by resolutions have subscribed to the Lutheran Confessions. It is true that doctrinal discussions in some places have revealed that much has been accomplished. However, it is also true that some doctrinal discussions have revealed a decided lack of doctrinal unity. What shall be done then? Instead of growing weary of doctrinal discussions, those who desire a genuine Lutheran fellowship should realize that this necessitates a deeper study of Biblical doctrine and the Lutheran Confessions, and a frank, but friendly discussion of the doctrinal differences which have been keeping us apart so that with God's help and under His blessings doctrinal unity might be reached.

It grieves a person whose heart is interested in genuine unity that there are those who would brush aside doctrinal discussion and boldly claim that agreement has been reached since we subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions. It grieves a person very much to hear that men are not willing to consider further doctrinal theses. It grieves a person to be told that this way to doctrinal unity is closed.

TODAY EFFORTS are being put forth toward fellowship via cooperation. Cooperative efforts have been proclaimed and heralded as harbingers of Lutheran fellowship and Lutheran union. Let me speak very frankly. If such cooperation involves joint work in missions, in Christian education, in student welfare work, in joint services celebrating great events, then cooperation is just another name for pulpit, altar and prayer fellowship. Without doctrinal agreement this spells compromise. It means yielding in doctrinal positions. Such fellowship will not stand in the light of Scripture. You realize, of course, that Missouri has been cooperating in externals in matters which do not involve pulpit, altar and prayer fellowship. Such cooperation should not and must not be interpreted as a step toward fellowship or a method of bringing about fellowship among Lutherans. Fellowship among Lutherans is possible and Biblical only where there is agreement in Biblical doctrine and Scriptural practice. Where such agreement has been reached, pulpit, altar and prayer fellowship will necessarily follow.

Efforts have been made to effect inter-synodical lay organizations. We are told that these organizations are to be of social and civic character and that they will avoid any attempt to become pressure groups which will demand Lutheran union. However, there, too, some have become so enthusiastic as to call this a real step in the direction of fellowship among Lutherans. Some have said that now we are getting down to the real issues, for in this way Lutheran union will emanate from the grass roots. Someone said that the past was the period for the clergy and the future is the day of the laity. Concerning the non-achievement of Lutheran union, someone said that the fault must be sought not in the pew but in the pulpit. We must carefully avoid every effort to pit the laymen against the clergy or the clergy against the laymen. God forbid that the impression should go out that the preachers have been blocking the cause of Lutheran unity. Let us guard against any indictment of those who have stood for Scriptural principles. We know that God has explicitly outlined the duties of His watchmen and God uses some strong language in that connection. The Lord wants preachers who are loyal to His cause, who will not deviate in the least from any part of His Word, who will defend every jot and tittle of it, who will insist that the Church continue in sound doctrine. On the other hand, God wants laymen who continue in His Word, who believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God. Efforts toward fellowship among Lutherans must never become a lay movement nor a clergy movement, but a church movement. It must find its grass roots not in the laity, not in the clergy, but in Scripture itself.

Another important feature which we must heed if fellowship among Lutherans is to be achieved is that church bodies practice thorough Schriptural discipline, brother-

ly discipline, both in matters of doctrine and in matters of practice. This business of preaching doctrine not in harmony with God's Word cuts deep bloody gashes into the body of the visible Church. Such as are guilty should be admonished by their brethren in a spirit of love. Love demands this. Love never closes an eye to indifference in doctrine but uncovers the fault and with God's help corrects it. True Christian love is not spineless but has a very firm backbone. Just think of the love which Jesus manifested toward Peter when He said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Or think of the firmness of Christ's love when He asked Peter that heart-searching question, thrice repeated, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" Think of the bold and firm love which prompted St. Paul to withstand Peter to the face when the latter had become guilty of hypocrisy. Even so our love must prompt us to uncover any false doctrine which we may find in any of our brethren.

Furthermore, doctrine definitely must be followed by practice. Indescribable harm has been done the cause of Lutheran fellowship when men become guilty of unionistic services, whereby they create impressions that after all there is no difference or that the differences are of little moment. Then, too, laxity and indifference over against the Christless secret orders should be mentioned. Irreparable damage is done not only to individual souls but to the cause of Lutheranism wherever a lax and indifferent practice obtains. Such practice definitely delays and hinders fellowship among Lutherans. I realize that most Lutherans subscribe to the principle, "Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants." However, it is common knowledge that only too often there are violations of this principle and no disciplinary action is taken. That hurts. That places barriers before the efforts toward genuine Lutheran unity. That shuts the door. How can we who want to be conscientious in upholding the principles of the Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions be expected to fellowship with those who sanction such unionistic practices and are indifferent to secret orders.

TODAY THREE definite streams, divergent streams, are visible in the Christian Church—the Lutheran, the Reformed and the Catholic streams. Certainly there can be no thought of any effort to bring the waters of Lutheranism and Catholicism together. The Roman Catholic waters are muddy and poisonous. The very fundamental issue of spiritual life is denied there. An anathema is pronounced upon all such as dare to teach that man is saved solely by faith. The most precious gem entrusted to the Church, "Justification by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith," is denied. The Gospel is emasculated. The sacrament of Christ's body and blood is mutilated. Mary and other saints are worshiped, etc. Hence we must guard against all Romanizing tendencies.

On the other hand, there cannot be a confluence of the streams of Lutheranism and Calvinism. The waters of Calvinism are also dangerously muddy and contaminated. We know that in some of these Churches there is great insistence upon immersion as the only mode of baptism and in practically none of them is there any emphasis upon the importance and benefits of baptism. We know, too, that the Reformed Churches deny the real presence in the Lord's Supper. To them the bread and the wine are merely symbols of Christ's body and blood, or merely represent the body and blood of our Redeemer. They deny that baptism saves and that the Lord's Supper conveys the forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation. In fact, the Reformed Churches do not admit that the Gospel and the Sacraments are means of grace, vehicles of God, to bring us the great blessings which Jesus has earned for us.

Unfortunately so-called modernists have crept into the Reformed Churches. At first they sought only tolerance, then equal rights. But now they have reached the stage where they dominate things in sectarian circles. In the Federal Council of Churches of Christ these modernists attempt to voice the opinions of all Protestantism. They do not, they cannot, they must not speak for Lutherans. I know that some have advocated some kind of connection with the Federal Council of Churches. I want to plead with every ounce of strength that God has given me that Lutherans in America may steer clear of any such sinful entangling alliances. Such practice positively shuts the door toward fellowship for Lutherans who wish to adhere to the doctrines of the Bible as set forth in our Lutheran Confessions. The very fact that the Federal Council of Churches has arrogated unto itself the prerogative of speaking for all Protestants presents a mighty argument why Lutherans should strive for genuine Biblical unity, in order that there may be fellowship and unity among them and speak for themselves.

Before I close let me add a final earnest and fervent plea for an honest and conscientious effort toward doctrinal unity among Lutherans. I have reference to the pathetic situation in Europe. It was my privilege a year ago to spend seven weeks in Europe. During most of this time, we attempted to survey church conditions in the land of the Reformation. I met a number of the bishops of the "Landeskirche." I met some of the leaders in the Free Churches, I spoke to a number of theological professors. I met Pfarrer Niemoeller and interviewed him for more than two hours. I know of the tremendous influence which Barthian theology has exerted upon the Church in Europe. I am acquainted with the mighty efforts on the part of the Reformed elements in Europe to Calvinize Germany and other Lutheran countries. I am convinced that Lutheranism in Germany is at the crossroads. There are leaders and clergymen who are very eager to return to Luther, to the Lutheran Confessions, to the Bible. I heard from their own lips statements as positive, as loyal, as determined, and as heroic as I have ever heard from anyone in our own Church. However, these people are in a sorry plight. The situation is tragic. Very few pastors have libraries. Men are actually starving because of a lack of sound theological literature. The Barthian group is busy. The Reformed element is very active and even militant. They are providing a set of

theological books, but we are told that there is not a Lutheran book among them. Bishop Meiser, Dr. Stroh, Dr. Sasse and others begged us to provide symbolical books, dogmatics, exegetical books and the like for them. In this connection let me say that last Thursday a letter from Dr. — reached me. I notice that the good Doctor corroborates what we found concerning the militancy of the Barthian group. He wrote, "The men in this camp are accusing Luther and Lutheran *doctrine* of being responsible for the rise of totalitarianism, the rise of Hitler, etc. They say that these terrible things occurred because the Lutherans distinguished between Law and Gospel and separated these two and because they taught a definite 'Reihenfolge' of the two. They declare that the Lutheran teaching concerning the Law and Gospel is the basic error; once this error is removed other problems will be easily solved." Then follows a plea from Dr. — that we might supply every German pastor with a copy of the sainted Dr. Walther's book on the proper distinction between Law and Gospel.

I have mentioned these things because I deeply feel the spiritual distress of the people in the land where once stood the cradle of the Reformation. I shall never be able to erase from my memory the classic welcome address delivered to us by Bishop Meiser before a group of fifty Pfarrer and many laymen in which he referred to the help given our Lutherans by Pfarrer Loehe and the Bavarians about a hundred years ago and how he turned to me and said, "Now the tables are turned. Now we are begging; and we plead that you do not fail us." What a fervent, touching plea! Can we, dare we fail them? I might as well ask, Is the cause of Lutheranism dear to us? If it is, we Lutherans in America should unite on the basis of sound Biblical doctrine and Scriptural practice. That is the only proper kind of Lutheran unity. Then we would be able to enjoy wholehearted fellowship among Lutherans in America. Then we would be in a position to cooperate wholeheartedly and could unitedly help fellow Lutherans in Europe to withstand the avalanche of Calvinism which threatens such destruction in this hour of crisis.

The Year in the Churches

By G. Elson Ruff
Editor of "The Lutheran"

THIS WAS THE YEAR when hope for just and enduring peace thinned out toward the vanishing point. Russia revealed its disturbing postwar plans. With painful effort the nations were maneuvering for place in a new balance of power. Meanwhile in Europe and Asia starvation and despair reached a terrible climax.

In such a world the Churches exerted themselves on behalf of mercy for the destitute. Through America the word went to congregations in each community, "Get out your old clothes; patch them and send them to ragged Europeans." Response was quick and generous. Shiploads of supplies were soon on their way. Food collections were conducted, and larger amounts of food were secured by wholesale purchase at home and abroad. In America the Churches urged their people strenuously to reduce their own food consumption to leave a balance for shipment overseas.

Churches of the prosperous countries worked together with singleness of purpose to help the cold and hungry. Wartime nationalist hatreds were almost wholly submerged. Geneva was headquarters for the Protestant work in Europe, with the Material Aid Division of the World Council of Churches as the administrative agency. Organization of the Lutherans of America, Lutheran World Relief, worked through the World Council department and in close relation with American interchurch agencies. Very generous among American Christians were those of the Church of the Brethren, whose shipments of food and livestock were enormous in proportion to the small numbers. The Friends' Service Committee was notable also for its far-ranging program of relief.

Churches Protest Starvation Policy

Best that could be done by the Churches was tiny in comparison with the appalling need. Heaviest part of the task was taken up by governments, through the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Thus, policies of relief and reconstruction adopted by the victorious nations toward those defeated in the war became of primary concern to the Churches.

Policy toward the Germans was that on which the judgment of United States Churches differed most sharply from that of their government. It is in the treatment of the chief defeated nation that our postwar strategy is most severely tested. No UNRRA supplies were to go to Germans, governments agreed. The German eastern boundary was to be rolled back to the Oder, and twelve to fourteen million people driven westward into the shrunken Reich. Germany was to have a hard peace.

"Our business in Germany is to tell the people what they can't do," American military men acknowledged at the beginning of the year. Protestant churches of Germany felt the conqueror's hand, as pastors in the American zone were barred from their pulpits in the denazification campaign. No help was given the anti-Nazi Germans in exerting constructive influence among their people. Churches of the United States were to send no

relief supplies into Germany, it was decreed. Dr. J. W. Behnken carried directly to President Truman the appeal of the Missouri Synod for reversal of this ruling. Drs. Franklin Clark Fry, Roswell Barnes, and G. Bromley Oxnam called on the president in January and received no word of encouragement. "Let the Germans have a hard winter," was the general opinion. Not until almost spring were the Churches allowed to send their first shipments even of used clothing to the defeated foe.

By September it was evident that the American Churches had put forth a more consistent and farsighted German policy than their government. In the name of Christian charity they had sized up the realities of the political situation more aptly than the State Department. In September, U. S. Secretary of State Byrnes found himself obliged to go into Germany to tell the people his government was going to extend hope to them. They were not to remain a vacuum nation—into which quite obviously the Russians were ready to move.

United Nations, Russia, Atom Bomb

Aside from the question of revenge on Germany, the Churches were inclined to think well of postwar American governmental policy. The United States had committed itself wholeheartedly to the United Nations organization, and was standing strongly for fair solutions of world problems. We in America could see little evidence of such a spirit in Russia. As tension mounted, American churchmen tried to define a Christian attitude toward Russia and its revived imperialism.

Discussion of the subject took place at an international gathering of church leaders, called by the World Council of Churches, which was held in England in August. There was organized an international affairs commission of thirty churchmen, of which the vice director is a Lutheran of America, Dr. O. Frederick Nolde. The commission would carry to the international level the type of work well done through the war years by the Peace Commission of the American Federal Council of Churches. Earlier in the year this commission, at a special meeting of the Federal Council, had brought forth a new statement on "The Churches and World Order," which sought to clarify Christian thinking.

Over all discussions loomed the possibilities of the atomic bomb. American scientists who created it were far more afraid of it than those not fully aware of its horrible potentialities. The scientists sought our churchmen, and conferred with them on creating public opinion in favor of international control, in hope that somehow the world might be restrained from suicide.

Plight of Europe's Churches

As American churchmen met world problems from their side of the Atlantic, Europeans were busy too, and in far more immediate peril. They accepted gladly the relief supplies shipped to them, and the help extended for temporary replacement of a few of the ruined churches, renewal of shattered ranks of their ministry, and rebuilding of Christian literature. Most of their problems they alone could attempt to solve.

In Germany, the Protestants were continuing within the EKID (Evangelical Church of Germany, which many wished to perpetuate as a united Church, but which perhaps an equal number wished to abandon when confessional churches can be fully organized. Strongly favoring a permanent EKID was Martin Niemoeller, who had otherwise distinguished himself during the year by courageous and unpopular calling upon the Germans to recognize their war guilt.

Such German churches as had escaped destruction were well filled with worshipers, but eastward where German-speaking peoples were being evicted from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the eastern provinces of Germany, congregations were scattered and the Church died rapidly. Russian policy in that area was not severe on Protestantism. Economic conditions were almost hopeless, but freedom of worship was not restricted. Protestants were influential members of some communist-dominated governments; in Hungary the president was a former Reformed Church minister. Churches were largely dispossessed of their land holdings, and schools were wrested from church influence. Heavy attack of the Russians, however, was on the Roman Catholic churches. Their great privileges in Poland were largely discontinued. And in Jugoslavia, it was charged, persecution had been heaviest of all, including the murder of hundreds of priests.

To combat Communist influence, Roman Catholics engaged most vigorously in their own political campaigns. In all western European countries Christian Democratic parties, with heavy Catholic backing, sought to win elections from the Communists. With the power of the Kremlin marshalled on the outskirts of Trieste, safety and well-being of the Vatican were far from assured.

Missionaries Return to Asia

In Asia, where Christian numbers were small, complex political developments did not so sharply involve the Churches. As India moved toward her troubled independence, it was likely that Christian influence would be diminished because it had been so long associated with hated British rule. One Christian, however, had been named to the interim government which was to seek to create a constitution.

In China the conflict of Nationalists and Communists did not directly involve the churches, except as continued disturbance made all constructive effort difficult. An American who had been a missionary in China for 40 years, Dr. J. Leighton Stuart, was named U. S. Ambassador to that country. Chinese Christians were still among the leaders in their nation's government, and Christian missionaries were urgently welcomed. More than 1,000 from the United States were Orient-bound at the beginning of autumn. Lutherans alone should have 1,000 missionaries in China, asserted Dr. Daniel Nelson, Lutheran World Federation director there. Evidence of new techniques in gaining access to the vast areas of

China was the purchase by Lutherans of an airplane for rapid travel. Relief supplies for China had gone forward from American churches in great abundance, although they were hardly a trickle in relation to need.

Japan, of all the conquered countries, had been dealt with most consistently and intelligently. The way was open, at least temporarily, for greatly increased Christian influence. The end of emperor-worship, chief prop of Shinto, and abrogation of laws restricting religious liberty, made possible a great missionary effort. Yet American policy was to keep missionaries out, to some extent because Japan had little food and shelter to share with them. Four American Protestants were permitted to make a tour a year ago, and finally six others this year were allowed to go for a longer period. By midsummer the number of missionaries slowly increased. First permitted to be sent out by any denominational mission board were two from the United Lutheran Church.

Church problem in Japan was that of survival of the union Protestant Church, the Kyodan, organized in 1941 under Japanese government pressure. Majority opinion favored continuing the union Church. Japanese Lutherans were uncertain, considering it probable that they should be organized separately if assured of strong American support. Episcopalians also would be outside Kyodan. Meanwhile, the churches faced great hardships. A majority of their buildings were gone, many of their pastors, multitudes of their people.

State of Church in America

America, with about 75,000,000 of the world's 600,000,000 Christians, had become the mainstay of the Christian movement in all lands. This was evident as the reconstruction in Europe and Asia got underway. American Christianity was not sure, in its first postwar year, how fully it could count on the loyalty of its own adherents. A tenth of the population had been in the war, out of touch with home churches. Still larger numbers had been involved in migrations to the war industries. Some churches found that service men returned to them with heightened loyalty. On the average, church loyalty had been somewhat weakened by the war. Giving to the churches reached new high levels, as money streamed through the American economy in bewildering abundance. Lutheran churches of the United States and Canada had paid off 70 per cent of their debts in five years. Yet the amount given to the churches was not really great in proportion to total national income, when 60,000,000 U. S. citizens were employed at a high-wage level.

The expected plunge into new church building construction, to be financed by large sums already accumulated for the purpose, did not materialize, due to acute shortage of labor and materials, as well as greatly increased costs of construction.

The first small reversal of a long-term downward trend in Sunday school enrollment was evident in all the churches, as people become somewhat settled once more, Sunday work tapered off, and the wartime influx of babies reached the kindergartens. Campaigns for increase in enrollment became the order of the day. Some churches bought buses to bring the children in.

The church colleges began to experience the greatest popularity in their history, as GIs—unable to enroll in larger institutions—turned to them in large numbers. Numbers of students doubled or tripled those of prewar years. The problem was where to find enough teachers and enough places for students to live.

Universities Turn to Religion

Meanwhile Lutherans, particularly, renewed their attempt to minister to students in non-church institutions. A focal point in American life for Christian influence was being surrounded. From leading administrators of such institutions came surprisingly strong help. Yale University would establish a new department of religion to develop greater ethical and spiritual values among its students, announced President Charles Seymour. The university, "cannot be neutral in religion," he said. "Religion must be a motivating force in the lives of students and in the world.

A committee of ten, appointed by President Seymour to study the problem, reported that "religion is so important an aspect of human life that no university is doing its duty without offering the best available instruction in this field . . A study of prayer, faith, and works will be no less profitable than a study of economics, history, or agriculture."

Thinking the same thought was President Robert Hutchins of the University of Chicago.

In the total picture of American life, the Churches showed heightened consciousness of major social problems. An end of racial segregation in the Churches was called for in a statement at the special Federal Council meeting in March, and in numerous pronouncements elsewhere. Sympathetic attitude toward ambitions of organized labor was urged on the Churches by many spokesmen. Roman Catholics in particular had set to work to gain influence in the trade union movement.

Juvenile Delinquency Decreases

Juvenile delinquency was less luridly reported, as home life was becoming more normal, and especially as millions of war-working mothers left their lathes and drill-presses. Undoubtedly drinking of alcoholic liquors had gained greatly as a national pastime. Some Churches launched new and vigorous campaigns against it. The public was not impressed.

Reports of moral lapses, particularly sexual incontinence, came home in increasing numbers from American men still serving in the armed forces in foreign countries. In Germany the disease rate among American soldiers reached an appalling high. This was a factor in church opposition to peacetime conscription, which was a subject of continued indecisive discussion in the U. S. Congress. Once the fall election was out of the way, the Eightieth Congress would pass the precedent-breaking law, it was generally believed.

Churches worked slowly in 1946 to gain some slight proficiency with the great media of public information, movies and radio. A Protestant Film Commission came into existence, and efforts to influence Hollywood were begun. Most notable publication from church circles within the year was the Revised Standard Translation of the New Testament, which its sponsors hoped would become the accepted version for public use throughout Protestant America.

Tension Between Protestants and Rome

Among themselves, the Churches of America were caught in conflicting currents. Between Protestants and Roman Catholics there was greater tension. Angry words were publicly spoken by high-ranking men of both groups regarding continued presence of Myron C. Taylor as the U. S. president's representative at the Vatican. Anxiety was felt in many Protestant circles regarding a supposed gain in influence of the Roman Church upon American life, particularly upon government. Catholics were after help for their private school system; the limited objective being public school-bus transportation for their pupils. The question in Wisconsin was to be put to a vote of the electorate in November.

There was also a sharp division within Protestantism between a vociferous fundamentalism, finding expression in the National Association of Evangelicals, and the middle-of-the-road group which adheres to the Federal Council of Churches and likeminded interdenominational agencies. Practically every Federal Council leader was called an infidel and offspring of Satan by the Bible-believers, as the fundamentalists have named themselves. Withdrawing somewhat during this year from the Bible-believers was the rampant fundamentalist revivalism known as "Youth for Christ," which had gained much public attention by its Saturday-night sessions in many cities.

Fundamentalist groups were growing, while some of the others, such as Northern Baptists, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians, had made little numerical progress in recent years. Partly because of uncertainty resulting from stationary or declining memberships, prominent denominations were discussing merger. The most unlikely to succeed had been that proposed for Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches, which finally received a decisive rejection at the hands of Episcopalians meeting in Philadelphia in September. The likeminded "Dutch Reformed," the Reformed Church in America, and the "Scotch Covenanters," the United Presbyterians, were rapidly moving toward merger. United Brethren and the Evangelical Church would complete their merger shortly. The Congregational-Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church—both products of recent mergers, were getting serious about uniting.

Hopeful Signs in Lutheran Church

Lutherans had little to say that was new on the subject of unity except that a very courageous statement had been published by a group within the Missouri Synod which would set at rest—if widely accepted—many of the irritations which have disturbed the peace. Shotgun sort of co-operation which had united all Lutherans, including Missouri, in overseas relief work had not proceeded without friction. In many areas Lutherans were uniting in local organizations for social work and some other tasks mutually endorsed. A hymnal, and perhaps a liturgy, to be used in common by more than half of the Lutherans of America, was a prospect rapidly shaping up this year. It won enthusiastic endorsement from all church bodies which were parties to its preparation.

Glimmer of hope for end of separation of the Lutherans in America came with tentative agreement among the church bodies that they will go together into the World Council of Churches if confessional representation is granted. The way is now clear for this type of membership. Augustana and the United Lutherans were already committed to the Council; Evangelical, United Evangelical, and Free Churches had postponed action. American Lutherans voted in favor of membership on a confessional basis in October. The Danish Church was also ready to join. There was growing likelihood in 1946 that the Missouri Synod would come into the National Lutheran Council next year.

The year ends as all years end, with God's purposes for tomorrow heavily shrouded from us, but with Christian courage for the future strongly evident among us.

SURVEYING the CONFERENCE

American Lutheran

By Arthur P. Michelfelder

Fricke Flies to India

DR. THEODORE P. FRICKE, commissioner of foreign missions of the American Lutheran Church, left by air Wednesday, November 27, from New York for India.

During his stay in India, Dr. Fricke will survey the postwar needs of the mission field in South India, confer with the missionaries about plans for the development of the field, extend the official and fraternal greetings of the Board of Foreign Missions of the American Lutheran Church to the India Conference and the South Andhra Lutheran Synod. He will also visit the missions of the United Lutheran Church and other Lutheran groups in India.

On his return trip he will attend the Lutheran World Federation meeting in Lund, Sweden, late in June of 1947. The prayers of the entire Church ascend to the mercy throne of God for a safe trip and great extension of the Kingdom, as God directs and commands.

Bon Voyage! Missionaries!

On December 13 nine missionaries, lay workers and four children set sail from San Francisco for New Guinea. The Rev. and Mrs. J. Mager, Mrs. Theo. Radke, Mrs. H. R. Hannemann, Mrs. Martin Heis, Mrs Sherwood Schroeder, Miss Marian Garbisch, Mr. John Kuntz, and Mr. Charles Pfarr were members of the party. On December 14, from New York harbor, sailing on the Queen Elizabeth were Missionary Dr. Carl Doermann, his wife, and two children, who return to India after a furlough. On December 21, Missionary William Oberdorfer and his bride left San Francisco on the *Marine Falcon* to begin work in India after completing Seminary work in Capital University. Missionary William Oberdorfer is the son of Missionary Carl Oberdorfer, now on the field in India. May God go with all these workers for Christ!

Cause for Rejoicing!

Word has just reached the church offices in Columbus that the Australian government is permitting eight former German missionaries who were interned in Australia during the war to return to the Finschhafen area to work in the field of their love. Day by day the Lord opens up doors and answers the prayers of His people.

Augustana Synod

By William E. Berg

Patriarch of Synod Summoned

ON NOVEMBER 3, in his home in Rock Island, Illinois, one of the noblest and most faithful leaders of the Church, and one of the most widely recognized and influential saints was sum-

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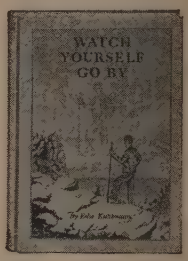

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moned to "Come Up Higher." Dr. Laurentius G. Abrahamson no longer speaks to us in person, but the memories of his sainted life and the influence of his ministry speak eloquently and live forever. His name headed the list of 993 pastors of the Synod. Dr. Abrahamson was one of the few surviving links between the pioneer period of the Church and our present day. Born 90 years ago and ordained 66 years ago, he was a contemporary of such synodical patriarchs as T. N. Hasselquist, S. P. A. Lindahl, Eric Norelius, O. Olsson and other illustrious leaders who helped lay the foundations of the Synod and who contributed mightily to its growth and development.

After serving as a successful and much loved pastor in congregational work for nearly three decades, Dr. Abrahamson became editor-in-chief of *Augustana*, the Synod's Swedish publication, a position he held for a period of nearly 30 years. *Augustana* became his pulpit, from which he reached thousands of souls with a mighty message of sin and grace, and with a positive message centered in the crucified risen Saviour. Through this ministry, he wielded a vital influence and helped establish many in the faith. Dr. Abrahamson was a powerful and commanding figure at conference and synodical conventions. He was a forceful and dynamic speaker, a clear thinker. His was a prophetic voice that compelled earnest attention and gripped hearts.

The committal service was held in Oakhill Cemetery, Chicago, on November 7, and Dr. Abrahamson was laid to rest beside his beloved wife who preceded him in death three years ago.

What a challenge to us—the departure of such heroes of the faith! May God raise up leaders to carry on—leaders whose faith is as deep as the Word—whose convictions are as sure as Christ—whose horizons are as broad as the world, and whose strength is the strength of God!

Augustana Layman Elected Governor

Judge Luther M. Youngdahl was elected governor of Minnesota by an overwhelming majority in the November 5 election. He is a member of Messiah Lutheran Church of Minneapolis. He has been very active in Christian higher education circles, in Brotherhood work, and in various activities of Conference and Synod. His pastor recently wrote of him, "He has a profound appreciation of spiritual values, genuine Christian life and conduct, and the centrality of the Church. No pastor could ask for a more understanding and co-operative layman." We thank God for Christian men in high office. When Christian people elect Christian leaders and support them with Christian unity, then Democracy will have its highest and most glorious fulfilment and expression.

Distinguished Augustana Teacher Called

Dr. J. P. Magnusson, who served for 40 years as a member of the faculty of Augustana College at Rock Island, Illinois, passed away on November 2. He was a thorough scholar and a beloved teacher who made a marvelous contribution to the growth and development of Augustana. He was an outstanding scientist, and his achievements gained for the college widespread recognition in the scientific world. God bless his ministry and his memory. His influence will live on.

Centennial Sunday

We quote from the President of the Synod, Dr. P. O. Bersell, in regard to the Centennial Program.

"We are entering 'the home stretch' in our Centennial observance. Less than two years remain of our much prayed for pre-Centennial efforts. As I try to evaluate the results of our efforts thus far, there is a word from Holy Scriptures that comes back to me over and over again. 'The harvest is

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past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.' It is true that we have succeeded fairly well with our Thankoffering . . . It is also true that our Synod as a whole has not fully entered into the spiritual effort of the Centennial . . I join with you in earnest prayer for a joyful consummation of our Centennial, with rich spiritual fruitage. A strong emphasis on Centennial Sunday will sound the keynote for the essentials of our appointed task as a Church."

Observance of Centennial Sunday was held November 3. It was reported that the minimum Thankoffering Goal has been reached. The Goal was $2,133,682. The total paid in is $2,134,901.31. However, the total amount pledged stands at $2,274.236.00. This means that approximately $140,000.00 remains unpaid. It is hoped that this will be cleared up by the end of 1947.

1947 Centennial Emphasis

With the coming of a new church year, another great and vital chapter in the Synod's Life and Growth program has been introduced. It is the "Ministry of Mercy of the Church." In the five-year program we began in 1944 with Home Missions and continued in 1945 with Foreign Missions. This year the emphasis has been on Christian Education. In 1947, from coast to coast, in every congregation, the watchword will be sounded, "To serve Thee in the Ministry of Mercy." In future columns we shall endeavor to report on this vital program.

United Evangelical

By H. Skov Nielsen

New College Office

A RECENT meeting of the Board of Trustees of Dana College and Trinity Seminary accepted a proposition from the Alumni Association by which an executive secretary of the Association will maintain an office on the campus and serve at the same time as director of public relations for the college. The new office has not as yet been filled.

On account of crowded conditions at the school, the usual homecoming banquet had to be cancelled this year. In place of it a buffet luncheon was served in the gymnasium. Guest speaker was Prof. Joseph Langland of the University of Iowa, a former member of the Dana faculty.

Stand of Youth Editor

Our new youth editor, the Rev. Leo M. Andersen of Luck, Wis., has taken a very very decided stand in recent issues of *The Ansgar Lutheran* against questionable amusements. In regard to the high school dance, his advice to Christian young people is an unqualified, "Have nothing to do with it." He admits it will not be found easy, but he adds: "No one has ever said that being a professing and witnessing Christian is easy.—We are not presenting an easy way out, but we are presenting the right way out."

News Notes

Miss Helen Danielsen, who has been enjoying a year's furlough from her work in the Lutheran Colombia Mission, recently left her home in Racine, Wis., to return to the field, which has now been taken over by the joint South American Mission Board of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and our own.

The Eben-Ezer Mercy Institute at Brush, Colo., has begun erection of a long planned and sorely needed addition to its Old People's Home.

The Salem Home of Elk Horn, Ia., is remodeling a private residence to serve as a temporary Invalid Home until the projected new building can be erected.

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Lutheran Free Church

By H. C. Caspersen

Resume Foreign Work

THE TIME HAS COME AT LAST when it has been possible for our Church to resume activities on our foreign mission fields: China, Madagascar, and Santalistan.

Nine missionaries left Minneapolis during November for different parts of the fields.

Pastor and Mrs. Leslie F. Brandt left November 4; these go out for the first time. Mrs. Fred Ditmanson, Mrs. A. S. Olson, Miss Almay Shirley, and Pastor Albert Olson left November 6. The two first named and the last one are new missionaries; the last named is a son of Pastor and Mrs. A. S. Olson, who now returns to the land of his birth, China, to join his father in mission work there. Pastors Olson and Ditmanson have been in China a good many years. Their work was interrupted by the war and they were held by the Japanese for a time as prisoners before they came home. They went out again a year ago. All of these will make a short stay on the West Coast visiting congregations and friends before embarking for China.

November 10 three other missionaries began their journey to Madagascar. They are: Pastor and Mrs. M. G. C. Vaagenes, and Pastor Paul Rönning. The Vaageneses have worked in Madagascar a good number of years previously, but during the war have served congregations in our Church at home. The last named goes out for the first time.

They left Minneapolis by plane for Paris, where they had to obtain passes to Madagascar which could not be obtained here. When that was done, they continued their journey to Tananarive, Madagascar, also by plane, the last part of their journey taking only three days.

Our Church is also represented on the staff of workers in Santalistan, India, and thither have gone Pastor and Mrs. Bernhard Helland, who have been there before. Pastor Helland served as secretary of the Santal Mission the latter years of his forced stay at home during the war.

A new worker from our ranks has gone to India—Pastor and medical doctor, Kristoffer Hagen. Pastor Hagen has served churches here at home for a couple of years; he then began his medical studies at the University of Minnesota and upon his graduation was called to duty by the Army, being stationed with the American forces in Germany for two years. He will be our first missionary-physician to Santalistan.

News Notes

President T. O. Burntvedt attended in November a meeting of the executive committee of the American Bible Society in New York. While there he visited our congregation in the Bronx and preached there Sunday. This church is served by Pastor George Mellby.

The secretary of the Board of Home Mission, H. C. Caspersen, and the director of the same, J. T. Quanbeck, have been on the West Coast recently, visiting congregations and preaching, also looking over certain fields which have been allotted to our board by the Regional Committee on the West Coast.

The West Coast is a large home mission field and needs the cooperative efforts of all Lutheran home mission boards and agencies.

Pastor P. A. Strommen, Sand Creek, Wis., will begin his evangelistic work on January 1. On Sunday, December 1, he installed his successor in the Sand Creek charge, the Rev. Gilbert Almquist, formerly of Lake Lillian, Minn. Pastor Strommen plans to begin his evangelistic work on the West Coast. He already has invitations on hand to last him until next October. There is

We Beheld His Glory

Nineteen Sermons for Advent Through New Year's Day

Prepared by Pastors of The Evangelical Lutheran Church

For inspirational reading in preparation for the pre-Christmas and Christmas season we recommend a splendid new collection of sermons by nineteen pastors and leaders of The Evangelical Lutheran Church. Three sermons, all based on Gospel texts, are presented for each of the four Sundays in Advent, for the Sunday after Christmas, and New Year's Day. There is one sermon for Christmas Day. All are evangelical, scriptural, helpful.

Contributors: Dr. George Aus, St. Paul, Minn. F. I. Schmidt, Madison, Wis. Sigurd T. Sorenson, Glendale, Calif. A. N. Rogness, Mason City, Iowa. Dr. L. M. Stavig, Sioux Falls, S. D. Dr. Herman A. Preus, St. Paul. E. S. Hjortland, Minneapolis, Minn. Joseph L. Knutson, Ames, Iowa. Dr. John P. Milton, St. Paul, Minn. Dr. S. C. Eastvold, Parkland, Wash. Joseph Simonson, St. Paul, Minn. Selmer A. Berge, Fargo, N. D. Dr. J. A. Aasgaard, Minneapolis. Dr. Morris Wee, Chicago, Ill. Fredrik A. Schiotz, Brooklyn, N. Y. Theodore Heimarck, Red Wing, Minn. Dr. T. F. Gullixson, St. Paul. Oscar C. Hanson, Minneapolis. Gerhard E. Frost, Decorah, Iowa.

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a great demand for such services all through our church body. Pastor Strommen will make Minneapolis his home address.

Evangelical Lutheran

By Olaf Lysnes

THE EVANGELICAL Lutheran Church in 1946 paid the coach fares round trip of all accredited lay delegates to the convention held in Minneapolis, June 11 to 18. So far as this writer knows, that is the first time that fares of lay delegates have been paid by a Lutheran synod to an annual or biennial convention. By districts it worked out this way:

Eastern	$ 1,713.40
Northern Minnesota	977.88
Southern Minnesota	794.22
Iowa	881.00
South Dakota	1,296.88
North Dakota	2,839.36
Rocky Mountain	1,696.79
Pacific	4,497.79
Canada	1,985.32
Total	$16,682.64

As these sums indicate, the amounts paid vary with the size of the district numerically, and the distance from Minneapolis.

While pastors pay their own traveling expenses—unless paid by the home parish—they have for over forty years had a fraternal arrangement of equalizing their fares. This year the average was set at $17.25. St. Paul and Minneapolis pastors paid in $17.25 each. Pastors from the Atlantic, Lower Michigan, Kansas (one exception), and outlying circuits in North Dakota District, and from all circuits in the Rocky Mountain, Pacific, and Canada Districts received refunds, while those nearer the center of the Church paid in. The advantages of this plan are evident: pastors far from the place of meeting are encouraged to attend conventions and keep in touch with the work of the church.

The suggestion has repeatedly been made that lay delegates should adopt a similar plan.

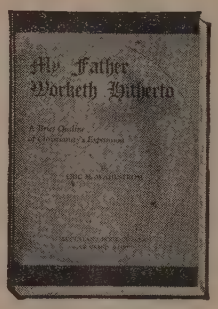
The 1946 synodical report contains the parochial reports for 1945. These increase the size of the book by 361 pages. They are edited by the general secretary, Dr. A. J. Bergsaker, and his capable staff, and are very expensive from the standpoint of composition and proof-reading. (Ask the printers and publishers on this point.) But these pages contain a vast amount of important information. The nine districts of the Synod are divided into 104 circuits. There are 2,747 churches or congregations. Number of souls in the E.L.C. is 661,355; number of confirmed members, 476,817; number of voting members, 320,694.

Who's Who

About 1913 and 1914 pictures and brief biographies were published of all Norwegian Lutheran pastors in America. The books were edited by Dr. O. M. Norlie with assistance from others. These books were in the Norwegian. In 1928 the biographies were published up to date in English, and the book was called **Who's Who Among Pastors in All the Norwegian Lutheran Synods of America. 1843-1927.** For the years following that the synodical reports containing the vitae of theological candidates ordained were sources of information.

However, after the lapse of some years following 1928, pictures and biographies began appearing in the Lutheran Almanac, the inexpensive annual published by Augsburg. This practice has been continued. The almanac also contains pictures and brief obituaries of pastors deceased during the preceding year.

Each a leader . . .



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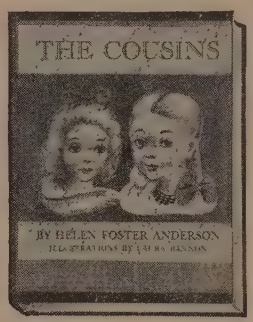

A JUVENILE

The Cousins. By Helen Foster Anderson. Illustrated by Laura Bannon. Again, as in her earlier book, "The Enchanted Valley," Helen Foster Anderson has captured the simple enchantment of the Swedish countryside and has given a portrayal of childhood in that northern land which contributes to the uniting of all children everywhere in a good and glad comradeship. **$2.00**

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LOOKING FORWARD TO CHRISTMAS

Another new Augustana Christmas Service for the Church School will soon be ready. CHRISTMAS EVERYWHERE by Ruth Youngdahl Nelson, the new 1946 Christmas Service will have three parts, successively, Christmas in the Schoolroom, Christmas in Homes and Churches, and Christmas for All the World. A most appealing feature is the dramatization by smaller children of the Bethlehem Scene. The service is simple, natural and flexible. Because it has child appeal it may be expected to appeal to older people.

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ON THE RELIGIOUS HORIZON

Plan Huge Protestant Building in Columbus

Ohio Council of Churches Has Dreams for National Church Center

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Plans for a huge national Protestant church temple, o cost in excess of 12 million dollars, ave been formulated by the Ohio Council of Churches.

The structure, designed to house na-ional offices of all Protestant churches, vould be known as the "Temple of Good Will," and will be located in the ivic center of Columbus on the banks f the Scioto River.

Originally planned as headquarters or Ohio Protestantism, the idea has grown to national scope and the Ohio Council of Churches, of which Dr. B. F. Lamb is executive secretary, is en-deavoring to receive approval and sup-port from all Protestant organizations n the country.

The preliminary architect's drawings, designed by John Quincy Adams of Columbus, were worked out on the basis of 370,000 square feet of office space plus an auditorium to seat 3,000 persons for conventions, a banquet room seating 1,200, several small conference rooms accommodating 100 to 200 each, a small chapel and a large chapel for 700 or 800 persons, and broadcasting studios.

Dr. Lamb pointed out in the first public announcement of plans for the "Temple of Good Will" that various headquarters of national Protestant church organizations now utilize 670,000 square feet of office space and that plans will have to be enlarged to provide plenty of space for everyone.

Moving of the national headquarters of the Christian Endeavor Societies to Columbus in the past three months has given added impetus to the proposal. The Christian Endeavor moved from Boston "in order to be nearer the center of population and the center of its membership."

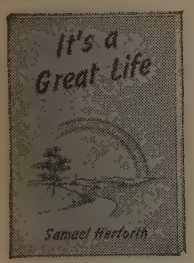
Also situated in Columbus at present are the offices of the secretary of the newly formed national organization of Community Churches, the Wartburg Press (formerly the Lutheran Book Concern) and Capital University, largest university of the American Lutheran Church.

Columbus, the capital city of Ohio, has a metropolitan population in excess of 425,000 persons and is the site of Ohio State University which now has an enrollment of 25,500 students as compared to its pre-war normal enrollment of 16,000. It is within 500 miles of two-thirds of the nation's population and has repeatedly been selected as convention grounds for many Protestant churches.

Main purpose of the Temple is to furnish office space so that all denominational and interdenominational organizations might be housed under one roof, to make it easy for them to cooperate in program building and development and also to facilitate growth toward unity in Christian spirit and action.

IT'S A GREAT LIFE

By SAMUEL HERFORTH



This book has everything: pathos, poetry, humor, human interest stories, fiction, philosophy, religion. It offers not only hours of pleasant and profitable reading, but also contains a variety of material properly indexed for use by public speakers and pulpit preachers. The book is the result of the author's lifetime habit of collecting clippings from various sources and writing on various experiences and incidents of general interest.

Samuel Herforth, the author, was born in South Dakota. His childhood days were spent in the Dakotas, in Wisconsin and eastern Iowa. He received his high school and college education at Wartburg College, Clinton, Iowa, and three years of theological training at Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa.

Since 1929 Pastor Herforth has served congregations in western North Dakota and Nebraska. At present he is pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Millard, Nebraska, eight miles out of Omaha. From May, 1943, to January, 1946, he was minister to the Protestant boys at Flanagan's famous Boys Town. Since 1939 he has been editor of the **Central District Luther Leaguer**, a youth paper. Many of his articles and poems have appeared in church publications.

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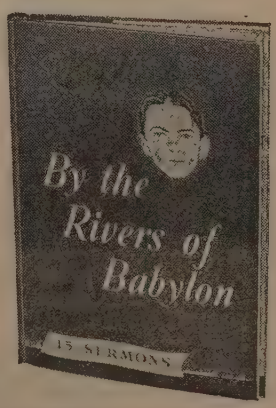

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Evangelicals Effect Union With Brethren

New Protestant Body Is Formed After Thirteen-year Courtship

JOHNSTOWN, Pa.—A new Protestant denomination—the Evangelical United Brethren Church—was formed here at the united General Conference of the Evangelical Church and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ following thirteen years of negotiations between the two groups and 133 years of fraternal association.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church, with more than 714,000 members, ranks as the 13th largest Protestant denomination in the country. The new organization has churches in 36 states and missions in five foreign fields.

The declaration of union was read by senior Bishop A. R. Clippinger of the United Brethren before 550 delegates and eight bishops of both denominations in an impressive ceremony at the First United Brethren church.

After reading the formal declaration of the merger, Bishop Clippinger tapped his gavel three times and said, "All this I declare in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Following this ceremony, Bishop Clippinger shook hands with Dr. John S. Stamm, senior bishop of the Evangelical Church.

After the ceremony Dr. Stamm told the delegates that the union "marks another step forward in the unification of the Protestant churches of America."

Formed by German Immigrants

Both denominations were formed by German immigrants in the first part of the 19th century. In 1813, initial attempts were made to bring the two groups together, but they failed. Nevertheless, there was close association between them until 1933 when commissions from both churches were appointed to work out a basis of union.

The plan was completed in 1942 and approved that year by the Evangelical Church. Three years later final approval also was registered by the United Brethren.

Both churches are relatively strong in Pennsylvania and the Midwest.

In addition to its world-wide mission activities, the merged church has eight colleges, eight benevolent homes, and three seminaries. It will have nine bishops, 52 annual conferences and 3,500 ministers. Its membership is composed of 451,643 communicants of the United Brethren Church and 263,000 of the Evangelical Church. Headquarters will be in Dayton, Ohio.

May Merge with Methodists

A commission on church federation and union was authorized to conduct unity conversations with other "evangelical Protestant groups."

There was a possibility that the new denomination might eventually merge with the Methodist Church.

Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of New York, a speaker at the general conference here, said he had been authorized by the Board of Bishops of the Methodist Church to state that if the new denomination at any time wished to open union negotiations, the Methodist bishops "would be pleased to receive such overtures."

Charges Polish Chaplains Seized Lutheran Churches

GENEVA—A number of Lutheran churches in former German-occupied areas of Poland have been requisitioned by Roman Catholic Polish army chaplains, the Rev. Stewart Herman, American official of the World Council of Churches, charged here. He said the churches were seized ostensibly to satisfy troop requirements but were subsequently converted to civilian use by Catholics.

One of the largest Protestant churches in Silesia—Breslau's St. Elizabeth Lutheran—has been seized in this manner, according to Mr. Herman.

He quoted a report from an official of the Breslau church, who said the seizure was a "decisive blow against Silesian Lutheranism and is part of a campaign to make Silesia Roman Catholic by force, if necessary."

Vatican Excommunicates A Priest for Heresy

Rome—For the first time in thirty-six years, a Roman Catholic priest has been excommunicated for life by the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office on charges of heresy. He is the Rev. Ferdinando Tartaglia, of the archdiocese of Florence, who has been judged guilty of "spreading false doctrines."

Vatican sources stressed that the decree of excommunication has been pronounced against Father Tartaglia exclusively on religious grounds and has no reference to political matters. The last life excommunication was invoked in 1910 against Father Ernesto Bonaiuti, who was accused of supporting "modernism" while lecturing on the history of religion at the University of Rome.

Under the excommunication decree, Father Tartaglia will hereafter be classed as a vitandus—a person to be especially shunned by the faithful. Catholics are not allowed to hold communion with a vitandus, even in secular matters, so far as can be avoided, the only exception being members of his family. A vitandus must not be buried in any sacred place, and if this ban is ignored, the body may be exhumed and interred elsewhere.

Balkan Churches Fight Atheistic Propaganda

GENEVA—The churches of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria are reacting strongly against the growing atheistic propaganda in those countries, according to a special report received here.

Serbian Orthodox leaders, the report said, admit that many followers are won away from the Church by this anti-religious drive, but they declare that there are also many who return to the Church's ranks.

Norwegian Parliament Opposes Compulsory Religious Teaching

OSLO — Overriding objections of Christian People's Party representatives, the Norwegian parliament adopted by a 22 to 14 vote a proposal that religious instruction should not be compulsory for children in state continuation schools. These are schools for young people who have completed seven years in public school, where religious training is obligatory.

Members of the Christian People's Party asserted that the proposal would seriously affect the moral training of youth, but Labor Party spokesmen countered by claiming that good character-training "can be based on other foundations than religious teaching."

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Scientists and Church Leaders Renounce War

Human Bloodshed Called Repugnant Both to Faith and Knowledge

PHILADELPHIA — Abandonment of warfare as an instrument of national policy was called for here by the new Philadelphia Conference of Churchmen and Scientists in what is believed to be the first statement of its kind issued jointly by leaders in the fields of religion and science.

The group, in one of five resolutions adopted unanimously, condemned warfare as "repugnant both to faith in the Fatherhood of God and human knowledge."

"The taking of life and the destruction of livelihood, which are the essence of war, violate the moral law of God," the resolution stated. "They are also inconsistent with the dignity of man, lowering the standards of intelligence and morality for victor and vanquished alike."

Other resolutions declared:

"The use of atomic energy in the weapons of warfare, making practical the mass destruction of entire cities and nations to non-combatants and threatening the very existence of our civilization, increases a thousandfold the objections which we hold to war.

"The processes of democracy can function only when citizens are unhampered by government and free to engage in the practice of their religious faiths and in pursuit of knowledge.

"The results of scientific work, which are discoveries of the nature of the world with which we have been entrusted by God, are for the benefit of all men.

"The application of these truths is of world-wide interest. The well-being of mankind should not be jeopardized by consideration of geographical or nationalistic boundaries."

The joint session of churchmen and scientists was held under the auspices of the Philadelphia Council of Churches, the Philadelphia Board of Jewish Ministers and the Philadelphia Association of Scientists.

Missions Leader Calls Soviets Anti-Christian

SILVER BAY, N. Y.—While Christianity and Communism both profess an interest in the welfare of humanity everywhere and desire to attain that goal by peaceful means, the Christian Church must recognize that it is inevitably bound to stand in theological opposition to the present Russian government, Dr. Wynn Fairchild, executive secretary of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, declared here.

Addressing a seminar period on the role of the Church in building a stable world order held in connection with the Silver Bay Conference on the Christian Mission in the Postwar World, Dr. Fairchild pointed out that it is difficult for Americans to adjust themselves to the idea that Russia as a government has completely repudiated Christianity and all its principles.

This "negative" faith is not only secular, he said, but definitely and aggressively anti-Christian.

"Russia is still in the process of an incomplete revolution," he declared. "Czarism per se has been eliminated but while the control of the states has nominally passed to the people, it is still government of the people, for the people, but not yet government by the people.

"The actual power rests in a small, practically self-appointed group which controls the Party to which it is responsible and through the Party the people. To what extent Stalin dictates to that inner group and to what extent his apparent dictatorship is the resultant of forces is not clear."

Asked if Russia was on the threshold of a phase of military aggression, Dr. Fairchild pointed out that although the Soviet Union maintained and supported a powerful military machine there was little likelihood that she would use it for this purpose. "Russia," he added, "wants peace, not war."

Catholic Student Congress Protestant Cooperation

FRIBOURG, SWITZERLAND—Cooperation with Protestants to promote mutual social aims was urged by the international congress of Pax Romana, which met here to observe the 25th anniversary of the organization, comprising Catholic university students throughout the world.

Attended by 600 delegates from over 30 countries, the congress urged members in every country to become affiliated with neutral organizations in the interest of social and moral progress and especially recommended collaboration with Protestants in efforts to promote Christian social welfare and to curb materialistic forces. It was stressed, however, that this collaboration should be carried on under the supervision of Catholic ecclesiastical authorities.

Western Civilization Saved By Christian Church

LAKESIDE, OHIO—Without Christianity, western civilization as it is known today could never have survived, Dr. Wilhelm Pauck, of the University of Chicago divinity school, declared here before 350 ex-servicemen attending a National Conference of Young Churchmen.

"If Christianity were to disappear today," Dr. Pauck told the young delegates representing more than a score of Protestant denominations, "men would have to create another religion in order to keep them aware of the purpose of their lives."

While many substitute religions have been advocated in the past, he said, Christianity has never yet been outrun by any of its religious rivals, of which the latest was National Socialism.

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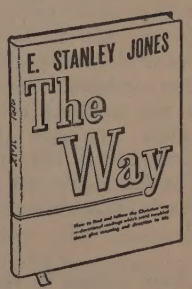

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Church Paper Opposes New Parochial School

Establishment of Parochial System Is Viewed with Alarm by Zion's Herald

BOSTON—A current trend toward establishment of Protestant parochial schools in the United States is called a potential threat to the principle of separation of Church and State by the Rev. Emory Stevens Bucke, editor of *Zion's Herald*, independent Methodist weekly published here.

Mr. Bucke's editorial in the *Herald* warns that "free churchmen must do some careful thinking on the issue" of parochial schools.

Citing establishment of Protestant parochial schools in Wilmington, Del., Boston, and Indianapolis, Ind., Mr. Bucke declares the problem of secularized public schools cannot be solved "if churchmen go off into an escapist corner and build their own little schools."

Calls Movement Decisive

The inevitable result of such procedure, he argues, will be a Jewish parochial system, a Protestant parochial system, enlargement of the Roman Catholic system, "and the atheists and Jehovah's Witnesses (will) establish theirs."

"Enthusiastic zeal accompanies the establishment of such ventures because of their apparent defiance of the accepted social custom," Mr. Bucke continues. "But very soon these ventures will have to swallow their pride and turn to public subscription or taxation to support their programs . . If the American people grant this financial help through taxation, then it will not be difficult for the parochial schools to demand further help."

The only way to reform the educational system, Mr. Bucke concludes, is by use of the democratic method "to purge our schools of incompetent teachers and grafting school committees . . most certainly the solution must be reached in the American way; the way which makes the public school system each citizen's personal responsibility."

New School in Boston

The Christian School, new preparatory institution for seventh, eighth and ninth grade pupils, opened in Boston on September 12 in rooms formerly occupied by Northeastern University. Present plans call for addition of the tenth grade next year, with a grade to be added each year until students can receive thorough preparation for college.

The new parochial school venture is sponsored by the New England Association of Christian Schools, Inc., composed of representatives of conservative Protestant churches. Voting membership in the Association is open to those contributing $10 or more yearly and who sign the statement of faith adopted by the organization.

Religious instruction will be combined with regular secular education. Every teacher will be a consecrated Christian, and emphasis will be placed on Christian principles and their practical application to daily living.

Clifford M. Peck, of Brookline, Mass., formerly of Newark Valley, N. Y., will be headmaster of the new school.

Dr. Mott Is Awarded Nobel Peace Prize

OSLO, Norway—Dr. John R. Mott, president of the World's Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations, was named here as winner of the 1946 Nobel Peace Prize.

Awarded for the first time since 1939, the prize will be shared by Dr. Mott with Prof. Emily Green Balch, of Wellesley, Mass., honorary international president of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Dr. Mott, who is 81, has been connected with activities of religious organizations for more than 50 years. In addition to his YMCA activities, which include positions of national as well as international responsibility, he is one of the five co-chairmen of the World Council of Churches and chairman of its joint committee on the younger churches.

French Catholics Urged to Repent Huguenot Massacre

PARIS—Father Yves M. J. Congar, well-known Dominican priest, has issued a plea here to fellow-Catholics to repent the massacre of Huguenots on St. Bartholemew's Day in 1572.

Writing in the *Temoignage Chretien*, joint Catholic and Protestant newspaper, Father Congar said that although the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre was not a Church act, but a political plot, French Catholics have been persecutors, often with violence, in attempting to stamp out Protestantism. He added this has "created a gulf of mistrust between Protestants and ourselves," which will only disappear when "past mistakes of violence" have been repudiated.

Father Congar recently officiated with a group of Catholic priests at a special St. Bartholomew's Day penance mass. These masses have been celebrated annually in Paris for the past sixteen years.

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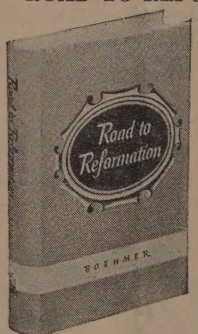

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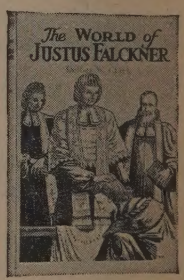

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Serious Church Decline Revealed in Brooklyn

Protestants, Catholics and Jews are Alarmed Over Losses in Membership

BROOKLYN, N. Y.—Traditionally known as the "city of churches," Brooklyn has experienced a severe decline of organized religion, according to a survey released here by the Brooklyn Church and Mission Federation.

The survey, believed to be one of the most comprehensive and complete studies ever made, was undertaken by the Committee for Cooperative Field Research of the Federal Council of Churches and the Home Missions Council at the request of the Brooklyn Church Federation.

It shows that Protesantism in Brooklyn has been waning at an alarming rate for the past several decades, and that Roman Catholicism and Judaism have also suffered losses.

Brooklyn is New York City's largest borough, with a population of 2,770,000, according to a 1945 estimate.

Afflicted by vast population shifts with their consequent social, economic, racial and religious changes, the characteristic Brooklyn church, according to the survey, is a "meager enterprise, ill-adapted to the complexity of urban life," suffering from inadequacy of personnel, outmoded physical equipment, and an overly-traditional activity program.

"Acids of Urban Modernity"

"Here," says the survey, "is a borough probably more than one-third Jewish, approximately one-third Roman Catholic, less than one-third 'Protestant' in the most inclusive cultural sense. All three groups have felt the effects of urban change. Even huge population growth seems not to have offset Roman Catholic loss. Only a part of the huge influx of Jews has frequented Hebrew synagogues or temples. The acids of urban modernity have a corroding effect on Protestant, Jew, and Catholic alike.

"Under the blight of competitive secularism, city dwellers of all faiths tend to lose institutional religious loyalties, and crowded city conditions, influenced by the cumulative effect of two world wars, make observable juvenile behavior an almost inevitable consequence of parental inadequacy. Against a prevailing paganism all high religion finds itself making common cause."

While Brooklyn Protestantism has had to face heavy losses in recent years, the survey points out, there have been some gains among Negro churches and certain Lutheran bodies.

Negroes and Lutherans Exceptions

"Negroes and Lutherans," it reports, "have been saving the day for Brooklyn Protestantism. If these two elements had not moved into Brooklyn, the Protestant retreat would have been even more precipitate."

The growth of the Negro population, however, has pointed up another acute problem for the churches, says the survey. The exit of whites and the influx of Negroes with the consequent need for readjustment have made "exceptional demands on both races for Christian graciousness and brotherliness."

"Where the church is most needed as a going concern with a vigorous ministry," the survey comments, "it has often almost ceased to exist, especially for the multitudes who live under its eaves."

In suggesting a "grand strategy" to combat the serious decline of organized religion in Brooklyn, the report urges that some way be found to pool the strength of all religious forces in an effort to "save and serve" the community.

Some Proposed Remedies

It is proposed that a lay commission, representing the three faiths, be set up "not simply for such general development of inter-faith sentiment as is already provided for, but to plan the maximum of cooperative religious effort possible within the limitations of present conviction and law."

Other proposals include:

1. Continuous processes of vigorous evangelism directed to all sorts of and conditions of men, irrespective of language, nationality, racial or religious backgrounds.
2. Church thinking along neighborhood lines with joint evangelistic projects, united week-day religious education programs, cooperative youth work, and united observance of seasonal events.
3. Emphasis on other forms of church school activity beside the Sunday school, such as bi-lingual and bi-racial experiments under competent leadership.
4. Use of the Church Federation as a liaison agent between the churches and organized labor.

Bishop Berggrav Seeks Transfer from Oslo

OSLO—Two hundred and thirty-eight clergymen of the Oslo diocese have sent a letter to the government Department of Church and Education expressing "sorrow" over the reported desire of Bishop Eivind Berggrav, Primate of the Norwegian State Lutheran Church, to be transferred to the Hamar diocese. Bishop Berggrav has been in ill-health since his liberation from Nazi imprisonment early last year.

The clergymen proposed as a measure to induce the primate to remain here that the Oslo diocese be divided so as to relieve him of much of his present burdens.

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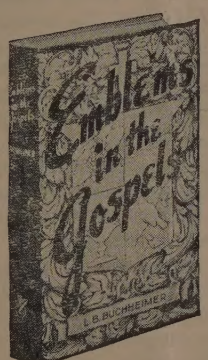

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Federal Council Urges Understanding of Russia

Declares Peace with Soviets Possible Despite Conflict in Ideologies

NEW YORK—The Federal Council of Churches declared here in a statement on Soviet-American relations that a "formula of tolerance" could prevent war with Russia, without compromise of basic convictions.

The statement, submitted by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace and adopted by the Council's executive committee, called for a "new way of international accommodation which will reckon with fundamental differences in outlook and practices."

"We are convinced," said the Council, "that a dynamic and fruitful peace can prevail in a world society where conflicts of faith are unavoidable."

Propose Three-Point Platform

The Council proposed a three-point platform in its "formula of tolerance" which, it said, is necessary to make the program workable:

(1) "The existence of conflicting beliefs must be considered as normal. People everywhere must recognize that differing beliefs and practices are normal in world society, now and in the future. Also, they must see that those who hold beliefs firmly will seek to propagate them without dilution or compromise.

(2) "All men must renounce the effort to spread abroad their way of life by methods of intolerance. The method of tolerance begins with recognition of the sacredness of the individual human personality. From that it follows that men should not be subjected to compulsion in matters of faith and reason.

"Individuals must be free to believe as their reason and conscience dictate. They must be permitted to propagate their faith by reason or emotional appeal and by the persuasion of good example.

"Governments, parties, and other organizations must refrain from imposing or promoting their own particular faith by means which involve violence or intimidation, legal privilege or legal disability, or fraud founded on concealment. It is that formula of tolerance which makes it possible to combine peace and diversity.

(3) "The United States must accept primary responsibility to secure international acceptance of the method of tolerance. The American nation knows the method of tolerance. Our people have used that method even—though imperfectly—for 160 years. They know that it can work both for peace and progress. They have learned that they cannot disregard it with impunity. They are equipped by experience to explain, and by faith to persuade. The American people and their government ought to dedicate themselves to do that with all the urgency appropriate to the greatness of the cause."

The church body urged the United States to renounce for itself the use internationally of the method of intolerance. At the same time, the Council called upon Communists to abandon their own methods of intolerance. It advocated that the United States eliminate from its national policy "certain prejudices and practices that unnecessarily create tension."

On the positive side, the church group called for cooperation of the American and Russian peoples at the scientific, economic, cultural and religious levels, and cooperation of both governments in the "curative and creative tasks envisaged by the United Nations."

Call for Disarmament

The church body demanded an end to the armaments race, warning that if this race is continued "it probably will lead to the destruction of both countries."

A section of the Council's statement was devoted to an analysis of the points of difference and contact between Christianity and Communism. This section declared:

"Within the Soviet Union there are many people who share . . . . Christian beliefs. Moreover, Communism as an economic program for social reconstruction has points of contact with the social message of Christianity as in its avowed concern for the underprivileged and its insistence on racial equality.

"However, Marxist Communism in its orthodox philosophy stands clearly opposed to Christianity. It is atheistic in its conception of ultimate reality, and materialistic in its view of man and his destiny. Its utopian philosophy of history lacks the essential Christian notes of divine judgment, divine governance, and eternal victory. Its revolutionary strategy involves the disregard of the sacredness of personality which is fundamental in Christianity.

"Such differences will never be removed by the compromise or surrender of faith by Christians. Also, Christians will not renounce, as to any part of the world, the right to go and preach the Gospel, teaching men to observe what Christ commanded. They will seek, everywhere, institutions and practices which reflect what they believe to be God's will for man.

"On the other hand, we cannot realistically anticipate that Soviet leadership will, at an early date, compromise its beliefs or institutions in such a way as to make them compatible with the Christian faith. Neither can we expect it to give up the right to propagate Communist beliefs in the world. Therefore, continuing tensions are unavoidable."

But, the Council added, despite these and other differences, peace is possible.

Neither System Perfect

As to economic tensions, the Council asserted, "Neither state socialism nor free enterprise provides a perfect economic system; each can learn from the experience of the other."

"A democratic people can, and should, retain antipathy to dictatorship," it added. "Their opposition, however, should not be sterile denunciation. The American people must make their democracy work. Racial intolerance, discrimination, and oppression are a standing negation of democracy and Christian morality. Only as we establish a good society at home can we expect that our society will have a spiritual appeal to the masses of mankind."

Wisconsin Rural Churches Gain, Survey Reveals

MILWAUKEE—The rural church in Wisconsin has held its own during the past decade despite the shift of population to urban centers, a survey of 400 country churches has revealed.

Five reporting denominations listed steady gains in membership for the period, although the total number of churches in rural areas declined. Attendance figures have risen, particularly during the war years, the survey showed.

State church leaders described the condition of the rural church as "difficult but encouraging." Greatest concern was evidenced over the marked decline in Sunday school attendance, off 40 percent in some cases. Draining of rural youth by the armed forces was credited partially for the decrease. A broadened youth program has been widely instituted to offset the decrease in church school enrollment. Most denominations are providing trained teachers for rural areas, and equipping country churches with visual aids.

Greatest difficulty confronting the rural churches is lack of adequately trained clergymen—men who know the farm and dairy community and understand rural people. More than 60 percent of the rural pastors in the state serve more than one church, some preaching is as many as five churches. One denomination reported that 90 percent of its rural ministers serve two or more churches.